Google

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at http://books.google.com/

3 2044 055 021 281

C133G.12.4

THE BEQUEST OF
JAMES WALKER, D.D., LL.D.
(Class of 1814).
LATE PRESIDENT OF
HARVARD COLLEGE.

Received 22 March,
1875.

[redacted]

SERMONS

PREACHED AT

TRINITY CHAPEL, BRIGHTON,

BY

REV. FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON, M. A.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:
FIELDS, OSGOOD, & CO.,
SUCCESSORS TO TICKNOR AND FIELDS.
1869.

43.56—
C 1336.12.4
✓

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

1875, March 22.
Walker Bequest.
(Vol. I., II.)

23-29
869.2

To

THE CONGREGATION

WORSHIPPING IN

TRINITY CHAPEL, BRIGHTON,

FROM AUGUST 15, 1847, TO AUGUST 15, 1853,

THESE

RECOLLECTIONS OF SERMONS

PREACHED BY THEIR LATE PASTOR

ARE DEDICATED

WITH

FEELINGS OF GRATEFUL RESPECT.

[redacted]

PREFACE

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

THE Reverend Frederick W. Robertson — whose beautiful life and early death have left the deepest impression of love, admiration, and regret, on all who knew him — finished his career on the very threshold of middle age, having exercised his sacred calling during the last years of his life in Brighton, where the effect of his ministry will long be felt by all classes, and where the seed of righteousness he sowed will yield increasing harvests when all personal memory of him must have passed away.

Mr. Robertson's appearance was extremely striking; he was tall and handsome, with a fine, regular outline, and clear, powerful, gray eyes. The expression of his countenance combined frankness, determination, and a sort of spiritual valiancy; so that with his firm and rapid movements, and sonorous, ringing voice, he produced almost a martial impression, and outwardly appeared the expres-

type of what he inwardly was — a courageous Christian soldier, a fearless fighter of the good fight, a powerful leader, strong to command, to exhort, and to encourage; whose daily life was war to the death with every base and evil thing, and whose preaching was like a clarion call to duty, to devotedness, to all that was holy, lovely, noble, and of good report.

The military profession was the one towards which Mr. Robertson first inclined, and his early predilections could still be traced in his character as a Christian minister, and are distinctly perceptible in various passages of his eloquent sermons, where the heroic devotion to danger and death, and implicit submission to discipline, of the true soldier, furnish him with frequent illustrations. A resemblance between the characters of Robertson and Arnold, in this respect, will probably occur to those who read these sermons with a recollection of the writings and life of the lamented Master of Rugby. In both there was a dauntless element of moral bravery, which partook in some measure of the quality of physical courage; both would have undoubtedly made enduring and intrepid soldiers, and it is interesting to find in the writings of both

of them a passage which with almost identical expression urges the duty of progress with the words, "The Christian soldier's motto is 'forward.'"

Mr. Robertson's life, short as it was, was one of familiarity with disappointment, sorrow, and harassing trials, for which the admiration and enthusiasm generally felt and expressed for his character and genius were hardly compensations; and, to those who knew him best and loved him most, it was hardly a cause of surprise that an organization of exquisite sensibility, such as his was, should have developed under the pressure of nervous excitement and mental distress disease in the head, which, after a short season of acute suffering, terminated his brief but beautiful career.

The present collection of sermons (which are but imperfectly preserved, as he never wrote or even made notes of his discourses) remains to attest the excellence and power of his preaching. But, beside the effect produced by his public ministry and personal intercourse on the more educated classes who came within his influence, Mr. Robertson obtained a power for good over the working men and mechanics of Brighton, which makes his name a

watchword still among them, full of divine inspiration, of strength, and efficacy. His deep respect and tender love for humanity induced him and enabled him to become a friend to the laboring population of the city where he lived, such as they may hardly hope in each of their individual lives to find again.

With the strongest feeling for their peculiar trials, he had a wise and true perception of their duties and compensations; his sympathy for them never betrayed him into injustice to others, and the temperate soundness and manly sobriety of his judgment prevented his genuine and deep tenderness of feeling from ever becoming that species of pseudo-philanthropy, which, in its championship of the rights of one class, forgets the claims of all men, and becomes a bitter sort of social fanaticism, which has nothing in common with the spirit of Christ.

The death of this man was assuredly his own exceeding great reward. To all who knew him, it must be a life-long loss, but sadly softened by the remembrance of his excellence.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

MEMOIR 7

FIRST SERIES OF SERMONS.

I. God's Revelation of Heaven 23
II. Parable of the Sower 39
III. Jacob's Wrestling 60
IV. Christian Progress by Oblivion of the Past 78
V. Triumph over Hindrances. — Zaccheus 96
VI. The Shadow and the Substance of the Sabbath 112
VII. The Sympathy of Christ 127
VIII. The Pharisees and Sadducees at John's Baptism 145
IX. Caiaphas's View of Vicarious Sacrifice 163
X. Realizing the Second Advent 179
XI. First Advent Lecture 195
XII. Second Advent Lecture 207
XIII. Third Advent Lecture 225
XIV. The Principle of the Spiritual Harvest 241
XV. The Loneliness of Christ 258
XVI. The New Commandment of Love to one another . . . 273
XVII. The Message of the Church to Men of Wealth 285
XVIII. Freedom by the Truth 306
XIX. The Kingdom of the Truth 318
XX. The Scepticism of Pilate 335
XXI. The Israelite's Grave in a Foreign Land 348

SECOND SERIES OF SERMONS.

I. Christ's Judgment respecting Inheritance 29
II. The Star in the East 46
III. The Healing of Jairus's Daughter 60
IV. Baptism 75
V. Baptism 92
VI. Elijah 106
VII. Notes on Psalm LI. 117

		Page
VIII.	Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge	1[illegible]8
IX.	Religious Depression	111
X.	The Faith of the Centurion	11[illegible]
XI.	The Restoration of the Erring	1[illegible]8
XII.	Christ the Son	172
XIII.	Worldliness	1[illegible]2
XIV.	The Sydenham Palace, and Non-observance of the Sabbath	198
XV.	The Early Development of Jesus	2[illegible]3
XVI.	Christ's Estimate of Sin	229
XVII.	The Sanctification of Christ	241
XVIII.	The First Miracle. I.	261
XIX.	The First Miracle. II.	277
XX.	The Good Shepherd	2[illegible]4
XXI.	The Doubt of Thomas	312
XXII.	The Irreparable Past	329

THIRD SERIES OF SERMONS.

I.	The Tongue	47
II.	The Victory of Faith	62
III.	The Dispensation of the Spirit	77
IV.	The Trinity	[illegible]2
V.	Absolution	111
VI.	The Illusiveness of Life	12[illegible]
VII.	The Sacrifice of Christ	1[illegible]2
VIII.	The Power of Sorrow	17[illegible]
IX.	Sensual and Spiritual Excitement	18[illegible]
X.	Purity	17[illegible]
XI.	Unity and Peace	19[illegible]
XII.	The Christian Aim and Motive	199
XIII.	Christian Casuistry	213
XIV.	Marriage and Celibacy	226
XV.	The Christian Church a Family	23[illegible]
XVI.	The Law of Christian Conscience	25[illegible]
XVII.	Victory over Death	27[illegible]
XVIII.	Man's Greatness and God's Greatness	2[illegible]9
XIX.	The Lawful and Unlawful Use of Law	3[illegible]7
XX.	The Prodigal and his Brother	31[illegible]
XXI.	John's Rebuke of Herod	3[illegible]2

MEMOIR.

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON was born in London, the 3d February, 1816. He had Scotch blood in his veins; his grandfather held a commission in the 83d or Glasgow Regiment, during the American war. Of his early life we know little; it seems to have been passed in considerable vicissitude. One fact is interesting for its clear foreshadowing of the man: when four years old he derived his chief pleasure from books; to the last he was an ardent, zealous student. He passed some years of his childhood at Leith Fort, where his father, a Captain of Artillery, was stationed. At nine we find him at the Grammar School of Beverley. Removed from this, he accompanied his parents to the Continent, residing chiefly in France; and at fifteen he entered the New Academy in Edinburgh, where, under Archdeacon Williams, he distinguished himself in Greek and Latin verse. After a year of the Academy, he attended the philosophical classes at the University, and prepared himself for the study of the Law.* The profession was uncongenial, his dislike to it grew upon him, and in a few months it was abandoned for the Army, to which he had a strong predilection.

He was of a military ancestry and a military family. To the end it was the heart of a soldier that beat within the delicate and shattered frame. "Those who have enjoyed his confidence, even of late years, can well understand the boyish ardor and enthusiasm with which he contemplated a military life. Despite extreme nervous sensibility, and an almost feminine delicacy of feeling, he

* Dr. Terrot, now Bishop of Edinburgh, acted as his private tutor.

was at heart brave, manly, intrepid, with a quick sympathy for all that was noble, courageous, and unselfish — with, as he himself expressed it, an 'unutterable admiration of heroic daring.'" Those who have read his Lectures on Poetry will not readily forget the ardor with which he relates the chivalry of our soldiers in Scinde, the strong sympathy by which he interprets the thoughts they only felt, the fine burst of enthusiasm with which he defends war against the abuse of peace societies:

"Take away honor and imagination and poetry from war, and it becomes carnage. Doubtless. And take away public spirit and invisible principles from resistance to a tax, and Hampden becomes a noisy demagogue. . . . Carnage is terrible. The conversion of producers into destroyers is a calamity. Death, and insults to woman worse than death, and human features obliterated beneath the hoof of the war-horse, and reeking hospitals, and ruined commerce, and violated homes, and broken hearts — they are all awful. But there is something worse than death. Cowardice is worse. And the decay of enthusiasm and manliness is worse. And it is worse than death — ay, worse than a hundred thousand deaths — when a people has gravitated down into the creed, that the 'wealth of nations' consists not in generous hearts —

'Fire in each breast, and freedom in each brow' —

in national virtues, and primitive simplicity, and heroic endurance, and preference of duty to life; not in MEN, but in silk, and cotton, and something that they call 'capital.' Peace is blessed. Peace, arising out of charity. But peace, springing out of the calculations of selfishness, is not blessed. If the price to be paid for peace is this, that wealth accumulate and men decay, better far that every street in every town of our once noble country should run blood!"

There must be many who yet remember the thrill of the words with which he prefaced Wordsworth's noble sonnet,

"It is not to be thought of that the flood:" —

"The moment was like that of the deep silence which precedes a

thunder-storm, when every breath is hushed, and every separate dried leaf, as it falls through the boughs, is heard tinkling down from branch to branch; when men's breath was held, when men's blood beat thick in their hearts as they waited, in solemn and grand, but not in painful — rather in triumphant — expectation, for the moment when the storm should break, and the French cry of Glory! should be thundered back again by England's sublimer battle-cry of Duty!"

That he retained this soldier-spirit is, in a man of his fervent piety, a proof that it is not an ungodly spirit. Colonel Gardiner thought it no blot on the escutcheon of his faith that he went out to fight at Prestonpans; heroic Hedley Vicars received his mortal wound as he led a bayonet charge. And had Mr. Robertson entered the army with the "deep religious convictions" he entertained, he would, by the grace of God, have wielded the same healthy Christian influence as an officer, though in a much narrower sphere, which he did wield as a clergyman.

God, however, had better things in store for him. He had been placed, at the request of King William IV., upon the Commander-in-Chief's list. Some delay occurred before he received his commission. His friends took advantage of it to urge the higher claims of the Church; among others, the present Bishop of Cashel pressed him to devote himself directly to the service of God. He was strongly moved, but not decided. He left it to his father to choose: the result was that he matriculated at Oxford. Four days after his matriculation, he received the offer of a cornetcy in the 2d Dragoon Guards; but his course had been taken, and he would not turn back. We need not point out the perfect confidence between father and son which this incident reveals, nor the humility and unselfishness of Mr. Robertson. They were manifested as touchingly and strikingly at another crisis of his history. They characterized his life.

There is but scanty record of his terms at Oxford. He

was a hard student, and acquired a high reputation; but, from a singular diffidence, he refused to go up for honors, though urged by his tutors, and twice requested, under peculiarly flattering circumstances, by the Examiners. Mr. Ruskin was one of his associates, and doubtless stimulated his keen relish for art. And from a passage in his Lectures, it appears that even then he cultivated the habit of close observation, the perception of the nicer shades of feeling, which distinguished him in riper years:

"At Blenheim, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, there is a Madonna, into which the old Catholic painter has tried to cast the religious conceptions of the Middle Ages, virgin purity and infinite repose. The look is upwards, the predominant color of the picture blue, which we know has in itself a strange power to lull and soothe. It is impossible to gaze on this picture without being conscious of a calming influence. During that period of the year in which the friends of the young men of Oxford come to visit their brothers and sons, and Blenheim becomes a place of favorite resort, I have stood aside near that picture, to watch its effect on the different gazers, and have seen group after group of young undergraduates and ladies, full of life and noisy spirits, unconsciously stilled before it, the countenance relaxing into calmness, and the voice sinking to a whisper. The painter had spoken his message, and human beings, ages after, felt what he meant to say."

While at Brazenose he witnessed two scenes which left an ineffaceable impression on his memory, to which he referred long after with lively emotion. He saw the triumph of "Arnold, the type of English action, and Wordsworth, the type of English thought." The two men who had quietly revolutionized England — who had been greeted at the outset with hostility and scorn — who, with firm, patient manliness, and in the living conviction of the truth they loved, had held on their way against reproach, calumny, inveterate prejudice, public opinion — were crowned in the same theatre with enthusiastic applause. It sunk deep into the heart of the student. There lay in it a sig-

nificant prophecy for himself. He reaped the darkness and the wrong; the glory and the light came too late.

Immediately after leaving college he was ordained, and discharged the duties of a curate at Winchester for about twelve months, when "his health began to decline, and he went on the Continent to recruit his shattered energies." In his absence he visited much of the beautiful scenery that is accessible to an enthusiastic, and, notwithstanding his nervous delicacy, hardy traveller. It was no doubt a time of exquisite enjoyment. His sermons abound in rapid sketches that unfold his intense delight in natural beauty, and which are remarkable no less for their poetry of expression, than their fidelity, and the vividness they assume from the notice of trifles, characteristic, but commonly unheeded. He was married at Geneva, and soon after returned to England. During the next four years he acted as curate of Christ Church, Cheltenham; and at the beginning of 1847 he removed to St. Ebbs, Oxford. It was while officiating here for two months that he received the offer of the Church at Brighton, with which his name and work will be always associated. "At St. Ebbs he received a stipend for his services miserably inadequate to their value; yet when the incumbency of Trinity Chapel, Brighton, with the comparatively splendid income to be derived from it, was pointed out to him, he only expressed a willingness to sacrifice his own personal convenience and emolument to the cause in which he labored, and left it to the Bishop of Oxford to send him wherever his lordship thought he would be most useful. The Bishop advised his coming to Brighton, and he prepared to do so." Between the Army and the Church, he left the choice with his father: between St. Ebbs and Brighton, with his Bishop There was the same humility, childlikeness, unselfishness: but in this instance more direct consecration to God, a

higher pitch of self-sacrifice. He entered on his work at Brighton August 15, 1847.

Hitherto he had been a quiet, faithful, laborious curate, doing his parish work zealously and unobtrusively, "benefiting greatly those under the influence of his ministry." Genial and lovable, he had many friends.

There were some to admire his rare powers; and a few even bold enough to follow his originality, though it led them very far out of the beaten tracks of thought. In Brighton it was different. Trinity Chapel was well known. It was occupied by one of the most aristocratic and intellectual audiences in England. His eloquence and originality could not fail to be marked. And if the congregation was intellectual, he was preëminently so. The Chapel became crowded. Sittings were scarcely ever to be had. For six years the enthusiasm never slackened; it grew and spread silently and steadily, and when he died broke out in a burst of universal sorrow. He was in no way misled by it. He was thankful for being listened to, for he felt he had a message from God to deliver. But he put no faith in mere excitement, the eager upturned face, the still hush of attention. "What is ministerial success?" he asks. — "Crowded churches — full aisles — attentive congregations — the approval of the religious world — much impression produced? Elijah thought so; and when he found out his mistake, and discovered that the applause on Carmel subsided into hideous stillness, his heart well-nigh broke with disappointment. Ministerial success lies in altered lives and obedient humble hearts; unseen work recognized in the judgment-day." That success was abundantly vouchsafed to him. It was the testimony of one who knew him well: — "I cannot count up conquests in any place or by any man so numerous and so vast, — conquests achieved in so short a period, and in many instances over the hearts and consciences of those whom,

from their age or pursuits, it is always most difficult to reach, — as were the conquests of that devoted soldier of the cross of Christ whose followers you were." *

Mr. Robertson left no means untried by which to win sinful men and women to the love of Christ. He sought them in their homes, in their haunts of vice, suffering no pain nor trouble of his own to hinder him, deterred by no fear of misconception, never losing sight of them, pleading with them with the irresistible force of an ardent nature sanctified and intensified by the Holy Spirit. Even in his undergraduateship, there were many who received through him light, strength, and the knowledge of a Saviour; and their number kept pace with the widening sphere of his influence.

Yet there was a dark side to all this, a shadow that blighted where it fell. The originality, the manly outspoken thoughts, the freedom from conventionalism and cant phrase, the firm grasp of truth, the bold utterance of it without respect of persons or parties, — all this, which had attracted no great notice in the curate at Winchester or Cheltenham, became as noted as the popularity of the incumbent of Brighton. From this time he was attacked with coarse abuse, his words were twisted, his meaning misrepresented. He was pursued with a venom which only religious men and religious papers know how to use; his simplest acts were turned into an engine to assail him; he was held up to odium by bad names, persecuted with a relentless cruelty that embittered his life. He did not complain. "It seems to me a pitiful thing," he once said, "for any man to aspire to be true and to speak truth, and then to complain in astonishment that truth has not crowns to give, but thorns." † But he had a feeble body, and a

* From a Funeral Sermon by the Rev. James Anderson, the excellent Preacher of Lincoln's Inn.

† Second Address to the Working Men.

nervous system which was exquisitely acute; and, "humanly speaking, his death was hastened by anxiety and intense susceptibility, acting upon an exhausted frame, unfit to cope longer with the trouble and suffering so plentifully strewn in his path." * To a man who was thoughtless enough to charge him with gaining considerable self-applause and great popularity with the multitude by affecting to look down from a cool, philosophic height on the struggle and heat below, he wrote a touching letter, in which he thus sorrowfully describes his own position:

'He will find himself [he is supposing his accuser in his place], to his painful surprise, charged on the one side for his earnestness with heresy, and on the other for his charity with latudinarianism. . . . . He will find his attempt to love men, and his yearnings for their sympathy, met by suspicion of his motives, and malignant slanders upon his life; his passionate desire to reach ideas instead of words, and get to the root of what men mean, he will find treated, even by those who think that they are candid, as the gratification of a literary taste, and the affectation of a philosophic height above the strife of human existence. I would not recommend him to try that philosophic height which he thinks so self-indulgent, unless he has the hardihood to face the keenest winds that blow over all lonely places, whether lonely heights or lonely flats. If he can steel his heart against distrust and suspicion, — if he can dare to be pronounced dangerous by the ignorant, hinted at by his brethren in public, and warned against in private, — if he can resolve to be struck on every side, and not strike again, giving all quarter and asking none, — if he can struggle in the dark with the prayer for light of Ajax on his lips, in silence and alone, — then let him adopt the line which seems so easy, and be fair and generous and chivalrous to all."

The rancor of his opponents did not even cease with life, — it followed him to the stillness of the tomb. In papers which met the eye of his afflicted relatives while the earth was yet fresh upon his grave, weighty doubts were expressed about the possibility of his salvation. The

* Preface to the Lectures on Poetry.

Christian mind of Britain has taken its own view of the matter. Edition after edition of his Sermons is exhausted. His name stands high, and it is rising surely to its fitting place. He is spoken of with strong difference of opinion sometimes, — but even then with respect and admiration; and his Sermons are already assumed to be a landmark in the religious thought of his country. There was encouragement, too, during these brief six years. On the Christmas morning after his settlement in Brighton, he found a set of handsome prayer-books on the reading-desk, presented by the *servants* who attended his Chapel. The year before he died, he received an address from the young men, no less affectionate than cheering to the heart of the pastor. He was able to say, in his reply: "I know that there are many who were long in darkness and doubt and saw no light, and who have now found an anchor and a rock and a resting-place. . . . . I feel deeply grateful to be enabled to say that, if my ministry were to close to-morrow, it has not been in this town altogether an entire failure." And, through all his trials, the love, and earnestness, and ready helpful sympathy, of his congregation, were an unspeakable comfort.

To his preaching we have previously referred in some detail. We shall not return to it now, though we feel painfully how much has been left unsaid. It was marked by an intense realization of the truth of Christ, and an equally intense realization of the life of Christ. He interpreted Scripture with a marvellous insight. A clear light often flashes from passages which another man would have left or made dark enigmas. The inward gifts which God bestowed on him in such large measure are manifest in every page of his writings. They were wedded in exquisite harmony to many outward graces, — those which lend effective aid to the persuasion of the preacher. He had "a noble and attractive mien;" "an utterance the most

exquisitely melodious and thrilling;" a face that reflected every shifting play of feeling; a figure frail, and made frailer by disease, but erect and manly; a refined delicacy, a winning grace. He spoke with an impassioned eloquence, of which his posthumous Sermons can give but faint conception. Men the most widely opposed to him, scoffers and careless sceptics, when they entered his church, were arrested by the torrent-flow of thought, the poetic imagery, the fiery glow of the words; yet more than all, perhaps, they were thrilled by his mysterious knowledge of the human heart, the depth and purity of his love for God. He was an extemporary preacher. His manner was to have "a few words pencilled upon a card or scrap of note-paper, and sufficing by way of groundwork; yet his spontaneous efforts were, in point of composition, as highly finished as if they had been set down and committed to memory." His style was simple, but not in the sense commonly received of sentences (no matter about the thoughts) running after each other on easy words of two syllables; for, though his language was plain, apt, and never redundant, the thoughts were profound, the reasoning close, the whole tone intellectual. It required patient and trained effort of mind to follow him and take up his fulness of meaning. His congregation was composed of the highly educated, and he preached to them as a man of education and refinement. It was his special vocation. Yet the poor were never sent hungry away. His later Sermons are pervaded by a tone of sadness:

"Not one of us but has felt his heart aching for want of sympathy. We have had our lonely hours, our days of disappointment, and our moments of hopelessness; times when our highest feelings have been misunderstood, and our purest met with ridicule. Days when our heavy secret was lying unshared, like ice upon the heart. And then the spirit gives way; we have wished that all were over, — that we could lie down tired, and rest, like the children, from life."

He dwells on "the lofty sadness which characterized the late ministry of Jesus, as He went down from the sunny mountain-tops of life, into the darkening shades of the valley where lies the grave."

His thoughts turn with a weary melancholy to the carelessness with which men live and die:

"Have you ever seen those marble statues in some public square or garden, which art has so fashioned into a perennial fountain, that through the lips, or through the hands, the clear water flows in a perpetual stream, on and on forever, and the marble stands there — passive, cold — making no effort to arrest the gliding water?

"It is so that time flows through the hands of men, — swift, never pausing, till it has run itself out: and there is the man petrified into a marble sleep, not feeling what it is which is passing away forever."

He speaks oftener of the hollow nothingness of the temporal and visible:

"Things are passing, — our friends are dropping off from us. Strength is giving way; our relish for earth is going, and the world no longer wears to our hearts the radiance that once it wore. We have the same sky above us, and the same scenes around us; but the freshness that our hearts extracted from everything in boyhood, and the glory that seemed to rest once on earth and life, have faded away forever. Sad and gloomy truths to the man who is going down to the grave with his work undone. Not sad to the Christian; but rousing, exciting, invigorating. If it be the eleventh hour, we have no time for folding of the hands; we will work the faster. Through the changefulness of life; through the solemn tolling of the bell of time, which tells us that another, and another, and another, are gone before us; through the noiseless rush of a world which is going down with gigantic footsteps into nothingness, let not the Christian slack his hand from work; for he that doeth the will of God may defy hell itself to quench his immortality."

The prophetic anticipation of the end was unconsciously tinging his thoughts; the burden and pain of life forced an utterance; and still, in this last extract, we see how

bravely his faith bore him up, firm, bold, unshrinking, unto death.

Mr. Robertson's work was by no means confined to the pulpit. By the working men he was regarded as a frank and faithful friend. Already, in 1848, he was actively engaged with a Working Men's Institute, the idea of which had been early in his mind. It was intended for a poorer class than were embraced by the Athenæums and Mechanics' Institutes, and the subscription was only a penny a week. In October of that year, one thousand three hundred members were enrolled. They besought him to deliver the opening address, and their anxiety overcame his objections. No one who has carefully perused that address can wonder at the affection the men bore to him, at the sway he held over their hearts, at the place his memory still freshly retains. For two years the Institute had great success. A small section of the members then advocated the introduction of sceptical publications. The society was threatened with dissolution. Mr. Robertson manfully came forward and delivered a second address, with the hope of restoring peace. "Brother men, members of the Working Men's Institute," he began, "you asked me to stand by you at the hopeful beginning of your institution; I could not desert you in the moment of danger, and the hour of your unpopularity. . . . . I am here to identify myself in public again with you, — to say that your cause is my cause, and your failure my failure." The introduction of infidel prints was maintained on three grounds, — rights of free inquiry, rights of liberty, and rights of democracy. On these three he met its advocates with excellent sense, warm, honest feeling, and sound principle. But "the society," we learn, "failed to right itself; and in July, 1850, it was formally dissolved. He counselled a second experiment, and another society; or rather, as he regarded it, the old one, purified by experi-

once, rose into being." It forsook, greatly to his regret, the good old title of Working Men, and assumed that of Mechanics; but it has flourished longer than its predecessor, and is still in full vigor. Politics, in the higher sense, had the same powerful attraction for Mr. Robertson that they had for Dr. Arnold. He took a deep interest in all national questions. Nor was his interest merely theoretical. In every movement in Brighton connected with social life and progress he was active and prominent. And on one social question, which underlies all others, the relation of classes, — the adjustment of the rights of the rich and the rights of the poor, — he spoke with a wisdom, and courage, and love, which had a notable influence in his own sphere, and from which we may now hope for far wider and even more permanent results.

In 1852, Mr Robertson delivered to the members of the Mechanics' Institution two Lectures on the Influence of Poetry on the Working Classes. They are necessarily brief, but every line is suggestive. We do not know that there is anywhere so true an estimate of our modern poetry: while the exquisite snatches of criticism on Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, reveal a power which, in these days of hasty reading, and flippant, shallow remark, we can ill afford to lose. Early in the spring of 1853, he followed up this subject by a remarkable lecture on the poetry of his favorite Wordsworth. The lecture was never published. It was preserved only in the notes of a reporter. But, did our space permit, we could not forbear quoting from that source, imperfect as it is, his fine perception of Wordsworth's calling, the relation he bore to the mighty heart of the nation. He reviewed the qualifications necessary for appreciating Wordsworth's poetry, his character and life, so far as they bear upon it. He reserved for another opportunity what he considered more important than either, — the question of how far Words-

worth's theories and principles are true, how far exaggerated, and how far he worked them out. That opportunity never came. During the lecture his friends remarked with alarm the hectic flush that rose upon his cheek, the evident effort by which the will triumphed over bodily suffering. "His exertions in the pulpit were at this period almost overpowering, and the intense study to which he had long accustomed himself became agonizing in the extreme" Before April he was compelled to relinquish his duties for a time, and seek change of air and relaxation. The end was drawing near.

Slightly recruited, but unwilling to remain longer from his post, he returned to Brighton in the third week of his leave. The effort was too great. With failing health and increasing pain, he continued to discharge every duty of his office. The congregation sought assistance for him; the vicar did not approve of the man they selected, and refused to appoint him. Alone, and "sinking rapidly," Mr. Robertson struggled on, a spectacle of quiet, unselfish heroism that might well shame many a brother of the cross. One week, his sufferings became rapidly more acute; his preparation for the coming Sunday laid on him the burden of a sharper agony. He gave way, at last. That Sunday a stranger took his place.* He never preached again. He lingered in his room for two months in the torture of an excruciating disease. He bore it without a murmur, with calm resignation to His will who chastens those He loves. He constantly assured those about him of his happiness and peace. He had penetrated the meaning of the Saviour's life; he was to follow Him through agony and death.

On Sunday, the 15th of August, the congregation knelt before God in supplication for their dying pastor. That

* By a singular coïncidence, the stranger was Archdeacon Williams, his former rector, who occupied the pulpit from this time till Mr. Robertson's death, and preached the Afternoon Funeral Sermon.

day six years before, they had felt for the first time the spell of his holy earnestness, they had sat entranced by the eloquent truth that flowed from his lips. During the day he was able to recline upon a sofa before an open window; towards night he grew suddenly worse. The pain was intense. He could not speak, save at intervals, when he cried, feebly, "My God, my God, — my Father, my Father." The yearning of his heart was soon fulfilled. His attendants sought to change his position. "I cannot bear it," he said; "let me rest. I must die. Let God do His work." They were the last words he spoke. In a few minutes the lips that uttered them were sealed in death.

There remains little more to be told. At Brighton there was profound and general sorrow. On the day of the funeral the shops were closed, the houses were in mourning. Strangers who had arrived inquired if one of the royal family was dead. Headed by one thousand five hundred of those who well remembered the address of "Brother men and fellow-workmen," the melancholy cortege wound through a crowd extending for more than a mile.

> "And women's tears fell fast as rain,
> And rough men shook with inward pain
> For him they ne'er should see again."

But there was one quiet, unnoticed mourning, more touching than the crowds of the procession, or the solemn awe that hushed the streets. In the gray dawn of the morning after the funeral, a group was seen weeping over the new grave. It was a mechanic, with his wife and children, dressed in such emblems of woe as they could afford. When Mr. Robertson came to Brighton, that man and his wife were rank infidels. One day, as he passed Trinity Chapel, he thought he would go in to hear what the new preacher had to say. The word was blessed to his salvation. He became a constant worshipper, and brought others to listen to the same teacher. We dare add noth-

ing to this. To those who can feel, it is more eloquent than words.

A monument to Mr. Robertson has been raised in Brighton Cemetery. The working men sought to have a share in it. On one side they erected, "in grateful remembrance of his sympathy, and in deep sorrow for their loss,"* a medallion, representing "their benefactor" seated in his library, in earnest conversation with three artisans. Within the railing of the monument there is a plot of garden ground. The same men asked and received permission to keep it free from weeds, and to supply it with fresh flowers.

* * * * * * * *

There are no materials for an exciting biography. There is an absence of striking incidents. But there is the power of a single, earnest, considerate life. Bare though it is, we cannot think of it unmoved. Nay, its very simple modesty, in contrast with the great results that have followed it, the great fame that time is wreathing round it, is infinitely more impressive than the noise of a public triumph, or the stir and glare that surround a public name. It is the life that speaks to us from the silence of its retirement; a voice to which all men, especially all clergymen, would do well to take heed. They will learn from it the hidden power of faith, the calm might that lies in communion with the truth, the nobleness and beauty and reward of a high self-sacrifice. They will learn from it to keep brave hearts when the clouds settle on their life, to trust that God will do His work, though not perhaps till their day is past; they will learn to hold steadfast by their work, though pain and sorrow are knocking loudly at the door; they will utter with the thankfulness of full hearts the aspiration engraved upon his tomb, "Glory to the Saviour who was his all!"—*Edinburgh Christian Magazine.*

* The words are taken from the inscription.

[redacted]

FIRST SERIES.

[redacted]

SERMONS.

I.

[Preached April 29, 1849.]

GOD'S REVELATION OF HEAVEN.

1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. — "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

THE preaching of the Apostle Paul was rejected by numbers in the cultivated town of Corinth. It was not wise enough, nor eloquent enough, nor was it sustained by miracles. The man of taste found it barbarous; the Jew missed the signs and wonders which he looked for in the new dispensation; and the rhetorician missed the convincing arguments of the schools. To all which the apostle was content to reply, that his judges were incompetent to try the question. The princes of this world might judge in a matter of politics; the leaders in the world of literature were qualified to pronounce on a point of taste; the counsellors of this world to weigh the amount of evidence; — but, in matters spiritual, they were as unfit to judge as a

man without ear is to decide respecting harmony, or a man judging by sensation to supersede the higher truth of science by an appeal to his own estimate of appearances. The world, to sense, seems stationary. To the eye of Reason it moves with lightning speed; and the cultivation of reason alone can qualify for an opinion on the matter. The judgment of the senses is worth nothing in such matters. For every kind of truth a special capacity or preparation is indispensable.

For a revelation of spiritual facts two things are needed: — First, a Divine Truth; next, a spirit which can receive it.

Therefore the apostle's whole defence resolved itself into this: The natural man receiveth not the things which are of the Spirit of God. The world by wisdom knew not God. And his vindication of his teaching was: These Revealed Truths cannot be seen by the eye, heard by the ear, nor guessed by the heart; they are visible, audible, imaginable, only to the spirit. By the spiritually prepared they are recognized as beautiful, though they be folly to all the world beside,— as his Master had said before him, "Wisdom is justified by her children." In whatever type of life she might be exhibited, whether in the austere Man of the Desert, or in the higher type of the social life of Christ, the Children of Wisdom recognized her lineaments, justified and loved her: she was felt by *them*.

Two things are contained in this verse: —

I. The inability of the lower parts of human nature — the natural man — to apprehend the higher truths.

II. The Nature and Laws of Revelation.

I. By the natural man is meant the lower faculties

of man; and it is said of these that they cannot discover truth spiritual.

1. Eternal truth is not perceived through sensation. "Eye hath not seen the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

There is a life of mere sensation. The degree of its enjoyment depends upon fineness of organization. The pleasures of sense arise from the vibration of a nerve, or the thrilling of a muscle, — nothing higher.

The highest pleasure of sensation comes through the eye. Sight ranks above all the rest of the senses in dignity. He whose eye is so refined by discipline that he can repose with pleasure upon the serene outline of beautiful form, has reached the purest of the sensational raptures.

Now, the Corinthians could appreciate this. Theirs was the land of Beauty. They read the apostle's letter surrounded by the purest conceptions of art. In the orders of architecture, the most richly graceful of all columnar forms receives its name from Corinth. And yet it was these men, living in the very midst of the chastely beautiful, upon whom the apostle emphatically urged, "*Eye* hath not seen the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Let us not deprecate what God has given. There is a rapture in gazing on this wondrous world. There is a joy in contemplating the manifold Forms in which the All Beautiful has concealed His essence, — the Living Garment in which the Invisible has robed His mysterious loveliness. In every aspect of nature there is joy; whether it be the purity of virgin morning, or the sombre gray of a day of clouds, or the solemn pomp and majesty of night; whether it be the chaste

lines of the crystal, or the waving outline of distant hills, tremulously visible through dim vapors; the minute petals of the fringed daisy, or the overhanging form of mysterious forests. It is a pure delight to see.

But all this is bounded. The eye can only reach the finite Beautiful. It does not scan "the King in his beauty, nor the land that is very far off." The Kingdom, but not the King; something measured by inches, yards, and miles — not the land which is very far off in the Infinite.

Again; it is perishable beauty — a sight to sadden rather than delight. Even while you gaze, and feel how fair it is, joy mingles with melancholy, from a consciousness that it all is fading, — it is the transient, not the Eternal Loveliness for which our spirits pant.

Therefore, when He came into this world, who was the Truth and the Life, in the body which God had prepared for Him, He came not in the glory of form; He was "a root out of a dry ground: He had no form nor comeliness; when they saw Him, there was no beauty that they should desire Him." The eye did not behold, even in Christ, the things which God had prepared.

Now, observe, this is an Eternal Truth; true at all times; true now and forever. In the quotation of this verse, a false impression is often evident. It is quoted as if the apostle by "the things prepared" meant Heaven, and the glories of a world which is to be visible hereafter, but is at present unseen. This is manifestly alien from his purpose. The world of which he speaks is not a future, but a present Revelation.

God *hath* revealed them. He speaks not of something to be manifested hereafter, but of something already shown, only not to eye or ear. The distinction lies between a kingdom which is appreciable by the senses, and another whose facts and truths are seen and heard only by the spirit. Never yet hath the eye seen the Truths of God; but then never shall it see them. In Heaven this shall be as true as now. Shape and color give them not. God will never be visible. Nor will his blessedness. He has no form. The pure in heart will see Him, but never with the eye; only in the same way, but in a different degree, that they see Him now. In the anticipated Vision of the Eternal, what do you expect to see?—A shape? Hues? You will never behold God. Eye hath not seen, and never shall see in finite form, the Infinite One, nor the Infinite of feeling or of Truth.

Again; no scientific analysis can discover the Truths of God. Science cannot give a Revelation. Science proceeds upon observation. It submits everything to the experience of the senses. Its law, expounded by its great lawgiver, is, that if you would ascertain its truth you must see, feel, taste. Experiment is the test of truth. Now, you cannot, by searching, find out the Almighty to perfection, nor a single one of the blessed Truths he has to communicate.

Men have tried to demonstrate Eternal Life, from an examination of the structure of the body. One fancies he has discovered the seat of life in the pineal gland; another, in the convolution of a nerve; and thence each infers the continuance of the mystic principle supposed to be discovered there. But a third comes, and sees in it all nothing really immaterial: organiza-

tion, cerebration, but not Thought or Mind separable from these; nothing that must necessarily subsist after the organism has been destroyed.

Men have supposed they discovered the law of Deity written on the anatomical phenomena of disease. They have exhibited the brain inflamed by intoxication, and the structure obliterated by excess. They have shown in the disordered frame the inevitable penalty of transgression. But if a man, startled by all this, give up his sin, has he from this selfish prudence learned the law of Duty? The penalties of wrong-doing, doubtless; but not the sanction of Right and Wrong, written on the conscience, of which penalties are only the enforcements. He has indisputable evidence that it is expedient not to commit excess; but you cannot manufacture a conscience out of expediency. The voice of conscience says not, It is better not to do so; but "Thou shalt not."

No; it is in vain that we ransack the world for probable evidences of God, and hypotheses of His existence. It is idle to look into the materialism of man for the Revelation of his immortality; or to examine the morbid anatomy of the body to find the rule of Right. If a man go to the eternal world with convictions of Eternity, the Resurrection, God, already in his spirit, he will find abundant corroborations of that which he already believes. But if God's existence be not thrilling every fibre of his heart, if the Immortal be not already in him, as the proof of the Resurrection, if the law of Duty be not stamped upon his soul as an Eternal Truth, unquestionable, a thing that must be obeyed, quite separately from all considerations of punishment or impunity, science will never reveal

these — observation pries in vain — the physician comes away from the laboratory an infidel. Eye hath not seen the Truths which are clear enough to Love and to the Spirit.

2. Eternal Truth is not reached by hearsay. "Ear hath not heard the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

No revelation can be adequately given by the address of man to man, whether by writing or orally even if he be put in possession of the truth itself. For all such revelation must be made through words; and words are but counters — the coins of intellectual exchange. There is as little resemblance between the silver coin and the bread it purchases, as between the word and the thing it stands for. Looking at the coin, the form of the loaf does not suggest itself. Listening to the word, you do not perceive the idea for which it stands, unless you are already in possession of it. Speak of ice to an inhabitant of the torrid zone, — the word does not give him an idea, or, if it do, it must be a false one. Talk of blueness to one who cannot distinguish colors, — what can your most eloquent description present to him resembling the truth of your sensation? Similarly, in matters spiritual, no verbal revelation can give a single simple idea. For instance, what means justice to the unjust, or purity to the man whose heart is steeped in licentiousness? What does infinitude mean to a being who has never stirred from infancy beyond a cell, — never seen the sky, or the sea, or any of those *occasions* of thought which, leaving vagueness on the mind, suggest the idea of the illimitable? It means, explain it as you will, nothing to him but a room; vastly larger than his own, but

still a room, terminated by a wall. Talk of God to a thousand ears, each has his own different conception. Each man in this congregation has a God before him at this moment, who is, according to his own attainment in goodness, more or less limited and imperfect. The sensual man hears of God, and understands one thing. The pure man hears, and conceives another thing. Whether you speak in metaphysical or metaphorical language, in the purest words of inspiration or the grossest images of materialism, the conceptions conveyed by the same word are essentially different, according to the soul which receives.

So that apostles themselves, and prophets speaking to the ear, cannot reveal truth to the soul — no, not if God Himself were to touch their lips with fire. A verbal revelation is only a revelation to the ear.

Now, see what a hearsay religion is. There are men who believe on authority. Their minister believes all this Christianity true; therefore so do they. He calls this doctrine essential; they echo it. Some thousands of years ago, men communed with God; they have heard this, and are content it should be so. They have heard, with the hearing of the ear, that God is Love — that the ways of holiness are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace. But a hearsay belief saves not. The Corinthian philosophers heard Paul; Pharisees heard Christ. How much did the ear convey? To thousands exactly nothing. He believes truth who feels it. He has a religion whose soul knows by experience that to serve God and know Him is the richest treasure. And unless Truth come to you, not in word only, but in power besides, — authoritative

because true, not true because authoritative, — there has been no real revelation made to you from God.

3. Truth is not discoverable by the heart — "Neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

The heart — two things we refer to this source: the power of imagining, and the power of loving.

Imagination is distinct from the mere dry faculty of reasoning. Imagination is creative; it is an immediate intuition, not a logical analysis. We call it popularly a kind of inspiration. Now, imagination is a power of the heart. Great thoughts originate from a large heart: a man must have a heart, or he never could create.

It is a grand thing, when, in the stillness of the soul, thought bursts into flame, and the intuitive vision comes like an inspiration; when breathing thoughts clothe themselves in burning words, winged as it were with lightning; or when a great law of the universe reveals itself to the mind of genius, and where all was darkness his single word bids Light be, and all is order where chaos and confusion were; or when the truths of human nature shape themselves forth in the creative fancies of one like the million-minded Poet, and you recognize the rare power of *heart* which sympathizes with and can reproduce all that is found in man

But all this is nothing more than what the material man can achieve. The most ethereal creations of fantastic fancy were shaped by a mind that could read the life of Christ, and then blaspheme the Adorable. The truest utterances, and some of the deepest ever spoken, revealing the unrest and the agony that lie hid in the heart of man, came from one whose life was from first

to last selfish. The highest astronomer of this age, before whose clear eye Creation lay revealed in all its perfect order, was one whose spirit refused to recognize the Cause of Causes. The mighty heart of genius had failed to reach the things which God imparts to a humble spirit.

There is more in the heart of man — it has the power of affection. The highest moment known on earth by the merely natural is that in which the mysterious union of heart with heart is felt. Call it friendship, love, what you will, that mystic blending of two souls in one, when self is lost and found again in the being of another; when, as it were, moving about in the darkness and loneliness of existence, we suddenly come in contact with something, and we find that spirit has touched spirit. This is the purest, serenest ecstasy of the merely human: more blessed than any sight that can be presented to the eye, or any sound that can be given to the ear; more sublime than the sublimest dream ever conceived by genius in its most gifted hour, when the freest way was given to the shaping spirit of imagination.

This has entered into the heart of man, yet this is of the lower still. It attains not to the things prepared by God — it dimly shadows them. Human love is but the faint type of that surpassing blessedness which belongs to those who love God.

II. We pass, therefore, to the Nature and Laws of Revelation.

First, Revelation is made by a spirit to a spirit — "God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit." Christ is the voice of God *without* the man; the Spirit is the

voice of God *within* the man. The highest Revelation is not made by Christ, but comes directly from the universal Mind to our minds. Therefore, Christ said Himself, He, the Spirit, shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. And therefore it is written here — The *Spirit* searches all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Now, the Spirit God lies touching, as it were, the soul of man — ever around and near. On the outside of earth, man stands with the boundless heaven above him; nothing between him and space, space around him and above him, the confines of the sky touching him. So is the spirit of man to the Spirit of the Ever Near. They mingle — in every man this is true. The spiritual in him, by which he might become a recipient of God, may be dulled, deadened, by a life of sense, but in this world never lost. All men are not spiritual men; but all have spiritual sensibilities which might awake. All that is wanted is to become conscious of the nearness of God. God has placed men here to feel after Him if haply they might find Him, albeit *he be not far* from any one of them. Our souls float in the immeasurable ocean of spirit. God lies around us; at any moment we might be conscious of the contact.

The *condition* upon which this self-Revelation of the Spirit is made to man is Love. These things are "prepared for them that love Him;" or, which is the same thing, revealed to those who have the mind of Christ.

Let us look into this word Love. Love to man may mean several things. It may mean love to his person, which is very different from himself; or it may mean simple pity. Love to God can only mean

one thing. — God is a Character. To love God is to love His character. For instance, God is Purity. And to be pure in thought and look, to turn away from unhallowed books and conversation, to abhor the moments in which we have not been pure, is to love God.

God is Love; and to love men till private attachments have expanded into a philanthropy which embraces all, — at last even the evil and enemies with compassion, — that is to love God. God is Truth. To be true, to hate every form of falsehood, to live a brave, true, real life — that is to love God. God is Infinite; and to love the boundless, reaching on from grace to grace, adding charity to faith, and rising upwards ever to see the Ideal still above us and to die with it unattained, aiming insatiably to be perfect even as the Father is perfect — that is to love God.

This Love is manifested in obedience: Love is the life of which obedience is the Form. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. . . . He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings." Now, here can be no mistake. Nothing can be Love to God which does not shape itself into obedience. We remember the anecdote of the Roman commander who forbade an engagement with the enemy, and the first transgressor against whose prohibition was his own son. He accepted the challenge of the leader of the other host, met, slew, spoiled him, and then in triumphant feeling carried the spoils to his father's tent. But the Roman father refused to recognize the instinct which prompted this as deserving of the name of Love — Disobedience contradicted it,

and deserved death; — weak sentiment, what was it worth?

So with God: — strong feelings, warm expressions, varied internal experience coëxisting with disobedience, God counts not as Love. Mere weak feeling may not usurp that sacred name.

To this Love, adoring and obedient, God reveals His Truth. For such as love it is prepared; or, rather, by the well-known Hebrew inversion, such are prepared for it. Love is the condition without which revelation does not take place. As in the natural, so in the spiritual world; — by compliance with the laws of the universe, we put ourselves in possession of its blessings. Obey the laws of health, and you obtain health; — temperance, sufficiency of light and air, and exercise, these are the conditions of health. Arm yourself with the laws of nature, and you may call down the lightning from the sky; surround yourself with glass, and the lightning may play innocuously a few inches from you. It cannot touch you — you may defy it; you have obeyed the conditions of nature, and nature is on your side against it.

In the same way, there are conditions in the world of spirit, by compliance with which God's Spirit comes into the soul with all its revelations, as surely as lightning from the sky, and as invariably. Such conditions as these: — "The secret of the Lord is with them that *fear* him." "No man hath seen God at any time." "If we *love* one another, God dwelleth in us." "With this man will I dwell, even with him that is of a *meek* and *contrite* spirit." "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." — Reverence, love, meekness, contrition, obedience, — these condi-

tions having taken place, God enters the soul, whispers His secret, becomes visible, imparts knowledge and conviction.

Now, these laws are universal and invariable; they are subject to no caprice. There is no favorite child of nature who may hold the fire-ball in the hollow of his hand and trifle with it without being burnt: — there is no selected child of Grace who can live an irregular life without unrest; or be proud, and at the same time have peace; or indolent, and receive fresh inspiration; or remain unloving and cold, and yet see, and hear, and feel, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

Therefore the apostle preached the Cross to men who felt and to men who felt not the Revelation contained in it. The Cross is humbleness, love, self-surrender — these the apostle preached. To conquer the world by loving it; to be blest by ceasing the pursuit of happiness, and sacrificing life instead of finding it; to make a hard lot easy by submitting to it — this was his divine philosophy of life. And the princes of this world, amidst scoffs and laughter, replied, Is that all? Nothing to dazzle — nothing to captivate. But the disciples of the inward life recognized the Divine Truth which this doctrine of the Cross contained. The humble of heart, and the loving, felt that in this lay the mystery of life, of themselves, and of God, all revealed and plain. It was God's own wisdom, felt by those who had the mind of Christ.

The application of all this is very easy: Love God, and He will dwell with you: — Obey God, and He will reveal the truths of His deepest teaching to your soul. Not *perhaps*: — As surely as the laws of the spiritual

world are irreversible, are these things prepared for obedient love: — An inspiration as true, as real, and as certain, as that which ever prophet or apostle reached, is yours, if you will.

And if obedience were entire and love were perfect then would the Revelation of the Spirit to the soul of man be perfect too. There would be trust-expelling care, and enabling a man to repose; there would be a love which could cast out fear; there would be a sympathy with the mighty All of God. Selfishness would pass, Isolation would be felt no longer: — the tide of the universal and eternal Life would come with mighty pulsations throbbing through the soul. To such a man it would not matter where he was, nor what: to live or die would be alike. If he lived, he would live unto the Lord; if he died, he would die to the Lord. The bed of down, surrounded by friends, or the martyr's stake, girt round with curses, — what matter which? Stephen, dragged, hurried, driven, felt the glory of God streaming on his face: when the shades of faintness were gathering round his eyes, and the world was fading away into indistinctness, "the things prepared" were given him. His spirit saw what "Eye had never seen." The later martyr bathes his fingers in the flames, and while the flesh shrivels and the bones are cindered, says, in unfeigned sincerity, that he is lying on a bed of roses. It would matter little what he was, — the ruler of a kingdom, or a tailor grimed with the smoke and dust of a workshop. To a soul filled with God, the difference between these two is inappreciable: — as if, from a distant star, you were to look down upon a palace and a hovel, both

dwindled into distance, and were to smile at the thought of calling one large and the other small.

No matter to such a man what he saw or what he heard; for every sight would be resplendent with beauty, and every sound would echo harmony: things common would become transfigured, as when the ecstatic state of the inward soul reflected a radiant cloud from the frame of Christ. The human would become Divine, — life, even the meanest, noble. In the hue of every violet there would be a glimpse of Divine affection, and a dream of Heaven. The forest would blaze with Deity, as it did to the eye of Moses. The creations of genius would breathe less of earth and more of Heaven. Human love itself would burn with a clearer and intenser flame, rising from the altar of self-sacrifice.

These are "the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Compared with these, what are loveliness, — the eloquent utterances of man, — the conceptions of the heart of Genius? What are they all to the serene stillness of a spirit lost in love: the full, deep rapture of a soul into which the Spirit of God is pouring itself in a mighty tide of Revelation?

II.

[Preached June 6, 1849.]

PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

CONFIRMATION LECTURE.

MATT xiii. 1–10. — "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow: and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

BEFORE the reception of the Lord's Supper on Sunday next, I have been anxious to address you, my young friends, once more, in order to carry on the thoughts, and, if possible, deepen the impressions of Tuesday last. During the last few weeks, you have been subjected to much that is exciting; and in proportion to the advantage is the danger of that excitement. A great part of the value of the rite of Confirmation consists in its being a season of excitement or impression. The value of excitement is, that

it breaks up the old mechanical life, which has become routine. It stirs the stagnancy of our existence, and causes the stream of life to flow more fresh and clear. The danger of excitement is the probability of reäction. The heart, like the body and the mind, cannot be long exposed to extreme tension, without giving way afterwards. Strong impressions are succeeded by corresponding listlessness. Your work, to which you have so long looked forward, is done. The profession has been made; and now, left suddenly, as it were, with nothing before you, and apparently no answer to the question — What are we to do now? — insensibly you will feel that all is over, and the void within your hearts will be inevitably filled, unless there be great vigilance, by a very different class of excitements. This danger will be incurred most by those precisely who felt most deeply the services of the past week.

The parable I have selected dwells upon such a class of dangers.

No one who felt, or even thought, could view the scene of Tuesday last without emotion. Six or seven hundred young persons solemnly pledged themselves to renounce evil in themselves and in the world, and to become disciples of the Cross. The very color of their garments, typical of purity, seemed to suggest the hope and the expectation that the day might come when they shall be found clothed with that inward righteousness, of which their dress was but a symbol; when "they shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy." As yet fresh in feeling, as yet untainted by open sin, who could see them without hoping that?

My young friends, experience forces us to correct

that sanguine anticipation. Of the seven hundred who were earnest then, it were an appalling question to ask how many will have retained their earnestness six months hence, and how much of all that which seemed so real will be recognized as pure, true gold, at the last Great Day. Soon some will have lost their innocence; and some will have become frivolous and artificial; and the world will have got its cold, deadening hand on some. Who shall dare to guess in how many the best-raised hopes will be utterly disappointed?

Now, the question which presents itself is, How comes so much promise to end in failure? And to this the parable of the sower returns a reply.

Three causes are conceivable: It might be the will —or, if you venture so to call it, the fault of Him who gave the Truth. Or, it might be some inherent impotency in the Truth itself. Or, lastly, the fault might lie solely in the soil of the heart.

This parable assures us that the fault does not lie in God, the sower. God does not predestine men to fail. That is strikingly told in the history of Judas:— "From a ministry and apostleship Judas fell, that he might go to his own place." The ministry and apostleship were that to which God had destined him. To work out that, was the destiny appointed to him, as truly as to any of the other apostles. He was called, elected, to that. But when he refused to execute that mission, the very circumstances which, by God's decree, were leading him to blessedness, hurried him to ruin. Circumstances prepared by Eternal Love became the destiny which conducted him to everlasting doom. He was a predestined man

—crushed by his Fate. But he went to his "*own* place." He had shaped his own destiny. So the ship is wrecked by the winds and waves — hurried to its fate. But the winds and waves were in truth its best friends. Rightly guided, it would have made use of them to reach the port; wrongly steered, they became the destiny which drove it on the rocks. Failure —the wreck of life—is not to be impiously traced to the Will of God. God will have all men to be saved, and come to a knowledge of the Truth. God willeth not the death of a sinner.

Nor, again, can we find the cause in any impotency of Truth. An impotency, doubtless, there is somewhere. The old thinkers accounted for it by the depravity of matter. God can do anything, they said. Being good, God would do all good. If He do not, it is because of the materials He has to deal with. Matter thwarts Him: Spirit is pure, but matter is essentially evil and unspiritual; the body is corrupt. Against this doctrine St. Paul argues, 2 Cor. v. 4.

The true account is this: God has created in man a will, which has become a cause. God can do anything;—I know not that. God cannot deny Himself; God cannot do wrong; God cannot create a number less than one; God cannot make a contradiction true. It is a contradiction to let man be free, and force him to do right. God has performed this marvel of creating a Being with free-will, independent, so to speak, of Himself—a real cause in His universe. To say that He has created such a one, is to say that He has given him the power to fail. Without free-will there could be no human goodness. It is wise, therefore, and good in God, to give birth to free-will.

But once acknowledge free-will in man, and the origin of evil does not lie in God.

And this leads us to the remaining cause of failure which is conceivable. In our own free-will — in the grand and fearful power we have to ruin ourselves — lies the real and only religious solution of the mystery. In the soil of the heart is found all the nutriment of spiritual life, and all the nutriment of the weeds and poisons which destroy spiritual life. And it is this which makes Christian character, when complete, a thing so inestimably precious. There are things precious, not from the materials of which they are made, but from the risk and difficulty of bringing them to perfection. The speculum of the largest telescope foils the optician's skill in casting. Too much or too little heat, the interposition of a grain of sand, a slight alteration in the temperature of the weather, and all goes to pieces; it must be recast. Therefore, when successfully finished, it is a matter for almost the congratulation of a country. Rarer and more difficult still than the costliest part of the most delicate of instruments is the completion of Christian character. Only let there come the heat of persecution, or the cold of human desertion, a little of the world's dust, and the rare and costly thing is cracked, and becomes a failure.

In this parable are given to us the causes of failure; and the requirements which are necessary in order to enable impressions to become permanent.

I. The causes of failure.

1. The first of these is want of spiritual perception. Some of the seed fell by the wayside. There are persons whose religion is all outside — it never pene-

trates beyond the intellect. Duty is recognized in word — not felt. They are regular at church, understand the Catechism and Articles, consider the Church a most venerable institution, have a respect for religion — but it never stirs the deeps of their being. They feel nothing in it beyond a safeguard for the decencies and respectabilities of social life; valuable, as parliaments and magistrates are valuable, but by no means the one awful question which fills the soul with fearful grandeur.

Truth of life is subject to failure in such hearts, in two ways. — By being trodden down. Wheat, dropped by a harvest-cart upon a road, lies outside. There comes a passenger's foot, and crushes some of it; then wheels come by, — the wheel of traffic and the wheel of pleasure, — crushing it grain by grain. It is "trodden down."

The fate of religion is easily understood from the parallel fate of a single sermon. Scarcely has its last tone vibrated on the ear, when a fresh impression is given by the music which dismisses the congregation. That is succeeded by another impression, as your friend puts his arm in yours, and talks of some other matter, irrelevant, obliterating any slight seriousness which the sermon produced. Another, and another, and another — and the word is *trodden down.* Observe, there is nothing wrong in these impressions. The farmer's cart which crushes the grain by the wayside is rolling by on rightful business — and the stage and the pedestrian are in their place: simply, the seed is not. It is not the wrongness of the impressions which tread religion down; but only this, that

outside religion yields, in turn, to other outside impressions which are stronger.

Again, conceptions of religious life, which are only conceptions outward, having no lodgment in the heart, *disappear*. Fowls of the air came and devoured the seed. Have you ever seen grain scattered on the road? The sparrow from the housetop and the chickens from the barn rush in, and, within a minute after it has been scattered, not the shadow of a grain is left. This is the picture — not of thought crushed by degrees, but of thought dissipated, and no man can tell when or how it went. Swiftly do these winged thoughts come, when we pray, or read, or listen; in our inattentive, sauntering, wayside hours and before we can be upon our guard, the very trace of holier purposes has disappeared. In our purest moods, when we kneel to pray, or gather round the altar, down into the very Holy of Holies sweep these foul birds of the air, villain fancies, demon thoughts. The germ of life, the small seed of impression, is gone — where, you know not. But it is gone. Inattentiveness of spirit, produced by want of spiritual interest, is the first cause of disappointment.

2. A second cause of failure is want of depth in character. Some fell on stony ground. Stony ground means often the soil with which many loose stones are intermixed; but that is not the stony ground meant here: this stony ground is the thin layer of earth upon a bed of rock. Shallow soil is like superficial character. You meet with such persons in life. There is nothing deep about them; all they do and all they have is on the surface. The superficial servant's work is done: but not thoroughly — lazily, par-

tially. The superficial workman's labor will not bear looking into; but it bears a showy outside. The very dress of such persons betrays the slatternly, incomplete character of their minds. When religion comes in contact with persons of this stamp, it shares the fate of everything else. It is taken up in a superficial way.

There is deep knowledge of human nature, and exquisite fidelity to truth, in the single touch by which the impression of religion on them is described. The seed sprang up quickly; and then withered away as quickly, because it had no depth of root. There is a quick, easily-moved susceptibility, that rapidly exhibits the slightest breath of those emotions which play upon the surface of the soul, and then as rapidly passes off. In such persons words are ever at command — voluble and impassioned words. Tears flow readily. The expressive features exhibit every passing shade of thought. Every thought and every feeling plays upon the surface; everything that is sown springs up at once, with vehement vegetation. But slightness and inconstancy go together with violence. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." True, but also out of the emptiness of the heart the mouth can speak even more volubly. He who can always find the word which is appropriate and adequate to his emotions is not the man whose emotions are deepest: warmth of feeling is one thing — permanence is another. On Tuesday last, they who went to the table most moved and touched were not necessarily those who raised in a wise observer's breast the strongest hope of persistence in the life of Christ. Rather those who were calm and subdued:

that which springs up quickly often does so merely from this, that it has no depth of earth to give it room to strike its roots down and deep.

A young man of this stamp came to Christ — running, kneeling, full of warm expressions, engaging gestures, and professed admiration, worshipping and saying, good Master! Lovable and interesting as such always are, Jesus loved him. But it lay all upon the surface — withered away when the depth of its meaning was explored. The test of self-sacrifice was applied to his apparent love. He was ready for anything. Well, go, sell that thou hast. It had sprung up quickly: but it withered because it had no root.

And that is another stroke of truth in the delineation of this character. Not wealth or comfort is the bane of its religion: but "when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by they are offended." A pleasant, sunny religion would be the life to suit them. "They receive the Word with joy." So long as they have happiness they can love God — feel very grateful, and expand with generous emotions. But when God speaks as to Job out of the whirlwind, and the sun is swept from the face of their heaven, and the sharp Cross is the only object left in the dreary landscape, and the world blames, and friends wound the wounded with cold speech and hollow commonplaces, what is there in superficial religion to keep the heart in its place, and vigorous still?

Another point. Not without significance is it represented that the superficial character is connected with the hard heart. Beneath the light, thin surface

of easily stirred dust lies the bed of rock. The shallow ground was stony ground. And it is among the children of light enjoyment and unsettled life that we must look for stony heartlessness: — not in the world of business — not among the poor, crushed to the earth by privation and suffering. That hardens the character, but often leaves the heart soft. If you wish to know what hollowness and heartlessness are, you must seek for them in the world of light, elegant, superficial fashion, where frivolity has turned the heart into a rock-bed of selfishness. Say what men will of the heartlessness of trade, it is nothing compared with the heartlessness of fashion. Say what they will of the atheism of science, it is nothing to the atheism of that round of pleasure in which the heart lives: dead while it lives.

3. Once more: impressions come to nothing when the mind is subjected to dissipating influences, and yields to them. "Some fell among thorns."

There is nutriment enough in the ground for thorns, and enough for wheat; but not enough, in any ground, for both wheat and thorns. The agriculturist thins his nursery-ground, and the farmer weeds his field, and the gardener removes the superfluous grapes, for that very reason: in order that the dissipated sap may be concentrated in a few plants vigorously.

So, in the same way, the heart has a certain power of loving. But love, dissipated on many objects, concentrates itself on none. God *or* the world — not both. "No man can serve two masters." — "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." He that has learned many accomplishments or sciences generally knows none thoroughly. Multi-

fariousness of knowledge is commonly opposed to depth; variety of affections is generally not found with intensity.

Two classes of dissipating influences distract such minds. "The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word." The *cares* of this world — its petty, trifling distractions, not wrong in themselves, simply dissipating — filling the heart with paltry solicitudes and mean anxieties — *wearing*. Martha was "cumbered with much serving." Her household and domestic duties, real duties, divided her heart with Christ. The time of danger, therefore, is when life expands into new situations and larger spheres, bringing with them new cares. It is not in the earlier stages of existence that these *distractions* are felt. Thorns sprang up and choked the wheat as they grew together. You see a religious man taking up a new pursuit with eagerness. At first no danger is suspected. But it is a *distraction* — something that distracts or divides — he has become dissipated, and, by and by, you remark that his zest is gone; he is no longer the man he was. He talks as before, but the life is gone from what he says — his energies are frittered. The Word is "choked."

Again; the deceitfulness of riches dissipate. True as always to nature, never exaggerating, never one-sided, Christ does not say that such religion brings forth no fruit, but only that it brings none to perfection. A fanatic bans all wealth and all worldly care as the department of the devil: Christ says, "How hardly shall they that *trust* in riches enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." He does not say the divided

heart has no religion, but it is a dwarfed, stunted, feeble religion. Many such a Christian do you find among the rich and the titled, who, as a less encumbered man, might have been a resolute soldier of the Cross; but he is only now a realization of the old Pagan fable — a spiritual giant under a mountain of gold. O! many, many such we meet in our higher classes, pining with a nameless want, pressed by heavy laws of the weariness of existence, strengthless in the midst of affluence, and incapable even of tasting the profusion of comfort which is heaped around them.

There is a way God their Father has of dealing with such, which is no pleasant thing to bear. In agriculture it is called *weeding*. In gardening it is done by *pruning*. It is the cutting off the over-luxuriant shoots, in order to call back the wandering juices into the healthier and more living parts. In religion it is described thus: "Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth." . . . . Lot had such a danger, and was subjected to such a treatment. A quarrel had arisen between Abraham's herdsmen and his. It was necessary to part. Abraham, in that noble way of his, gave him the choice of the country when they separated. Either hand for Abraham: either the right hand or the left: — what cared the pilgrim of the Invisible for fertile lands or rugged sands? Lot chose wisely, as they of the world speak. Well, if this world be all, he got a rich soil, became a prince, had kings for his society and neighbors. It was nothing to Lot that "the men of the land were sinners before the Lord exceedingly;" — enough that it was well watered everywhere. But his wife became enervated by voluptuousness, and his children tainted with ineradicable

corruption — the moral miasma of the society wherein he had made his home. Two warnings God gave him. First, his home and property were spoiled by the enemy; then came the fire from heaven; and he fled from the cities of the plain a ruined man. His wife looked back with lingering regret upon the splendid home of her luxury and voluptuousness, and was overwhelmed in the encrusting salt; his children carried with them into a new world the plague-spot of that profligacy which had been the child of affluence and idleness; and the spirit of that rain of fire — of the buried Cities of the Plain — rose again in the darkest of the crimes which the Old Testament records, to poison the new society at its very fountain. And so the old man stood at last upon the brink of the grave, a blackened ruin scathed by lightning, — over the grave of his wife, and the shame of his family — saved, but only so as by fire.

It is a painful thing that weeding work. "Every branch in me that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The keen edge of God's pruning-knife cuts sheer through. No weak tenderness stops Him whose love seeks Goodness, not Comfort, for his servants. A man's distractions are in his wealth, and perhaps fire or failure make him bankrupt: what he feels is God's sharp knife. Pleasure has dissipated his heart, and a stricken frame forbids his enjoying pleasure; shattered nerves and broken health wear out the life of life. Or, perhaps, it comes in a sharper, sadder form: the shaft of death goes home — there is heard the wail of danger in his home. And then, when sickness has passed on to hopelessness, and hopelessness has passed on to death, the

crushed man goes into the chamber of the dead; and there, when he shuts down the lid upon the coffin of his wife, or the coffin of his child, his heart begins to tell him the meaning of all this. Thorns had been growing in his heart, and the sharp knife had been at work making room; but by an awful desolation—tearing up and cutting down, that the life of God in the soul may not be choked.

II. For the permanence of religious impressions this parable suggests three requirements: "They on the good ground are they which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

1. "An honest and good heart." Earnestness: that is, sincerity of purpose. Now, sincerity is reckoned, by an exaggeration, sometimes the only virtue. So that a man be sincere, they say, it matters little what he thinks or what he is. But in Truth is the basis of all goodness; without which, goodness of any kind is impossible. There are faults more heinous, but none more ruinous, than insincerity. Subtle minds, which have no broad, firm footing on reality, lose everything by degrees, and may be transformed into any shape of evil; may become guilty of anything, and excuse it to themselves. To this sincerity is given, in the parable, success: a harvest thirty-fold, sixty-fold, an hundred-fold.

This earnestness is the first requisite for real success in everything. Do you wish to become rich?—You may become rich: that is, if you desire it in no half-way, but thoroughly. A miser sacrifices all to this single passion; hoards farthings, and dies possessed

of wealth. Do you wish to master any science or accomplishment? — Give yourself to it, and it lies beneath your feet. Time and pains will do anything. This world is given as the prize for the men in earnest; and that which is true of this world is truer still of the world to come. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Only there is this difference. In the pursuit of wealth, knowledge, reputation, circumstances have power to mar the wisest schemes. The hoard of years may be lost in a single night. The wisdom hived up by a whole life may perish when some fever impairs memory. But in the kingdom of Christ, where inward character is the prize, no chance can rob earnestness of its exactly proportioned due of success. "*Whatsoever* a man soweth, that shall he also reap." There is no blight, nor mildew, nor scorching sun, nor rain-deluge, which can turn that harvest into a failure. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." . . . . Sow for time, and *probably* you will succeed in time. Sow the seed of Life, — humbleness, pure-heartedness, Love, — and, in the long Eternity which lies before the soul, every minutest grain will come up again with an increase of thirty, sixty, or an hundred fold.

2. Meditation is a second requisite for permanence. They *keep* the word which they have heard.

Now, meditation is often confounded with something which only partially resembles it. Sometimes we sit in a kind of day-dream, the mind expatiating far away into vacancy, while minutes and hours slip by, almost unmarked, in mere vacuity. That is not meditation, but revery, — a state to which the soul resigns itself in pure passivity. When the soul is absent and dream-

ing, let no man think that that is spiritual meditation, or anything that is spiritual.

Meditation is partly a passive, partly an active state. Whoever has pondered long over a plan which he is anxious to accomplish, without distinctly seeing at first the way, knows what meditation is. The subject presents itself in leisure moments spontaneously; but, then, all this sets the mind at work—contriving, imagining, rejecting, modifying. It is in this way that one of the greatest of English engineers, a man uncouth and unaccustomed to regular discipline of mind, is said to have accomplished his most marvellous triumphs. He threw bridges over almost impracticable torrents, and pierced the eternal mountains for his viaducts. Sometimes a difficulty brought all the work to a pause: then he would shut himself up in his room, eat nothing, speak to no one, abandon himself intensely to the contemplation of that on which his heart was set; and, at the end of two or three days, would come forth serene and calm, walk to the spot, and quietly give orders which seemed the result of superhuman intuition. This was meditation.

He knows, again, what it is, who has ever earnestly and sincerely loved one living human being. The image of his friend rises unbidden by day and night, stands before his soul in the street and in the field, comes athwart his every thought, and mixes its presence with his every plan. So far all is passive. But besides this he plans and contrives for that other's happiness; tries to devise what would give pleasure; examines his own conduct and conversation, to avoid that which can by any possibility give pain. This is meditation.

So, too, is meditation on religious truth carried on. If it first be loved, it will recur spontaneously to the heart.

But then it is dwelt on till it receives innumerable applications; is again and again brought up to the sun and tried in various lights, and so incorporates itself with the realities of practical existence.

Meditation is done in silence. By it we renounce our narrow individuality, and expatiate into that which is infinite. Only in the sacredness of inward silence does the soul truly meet the secret, hiding God. The strength of resolve, which afterwards shapes life and mixes itself with action, is the fruit of those sacred, solitary moments. There is a divine depth in silence. We meet God alone.

For this reason, I urged it upon so many of you to spend the hours previous to your Confirmation separate from friends, from books, from everything human, and to force yourselves into the Awful Presence.

Have we never felt how human presence, if frivolous, in such moments frivolizes the soul, and how impossible it is to come in contact with any thoughts which are sublime, or drink in one inspiration which is from Heaven, without degrading it, even though surrounded by all that would naturally suggest tender and awful feeling, when such are by?

It is not the number of books you read, nor the variety of sermons which you hear, nor the amount of religious conversation in which you mix; but it is the frequency and the earnestness with which you meditate on these things, till the truth which may be in them becomes your own, and part of your own being, that insures your spiritual growth.

3. The third requisite is endurance. "They bring forth fruit with patience." Patience is of two kinds. There is an active and there is a passive endurance. The former is a masculine, the latter for the most part a feminine virtue. Female patience is exhibited chiefly in fortitude; in bearing pain and sorrow meekly, without complaining. In the old Hebrew life female endurance shines almost as brightly as in any life which Christianity itself can mould. Hannah, under the provocations and taunts of her rival, answering not again her husband's rebuke, humbly replying to Eli's unjust blame, is true to the type of womanly endurance. For the type of man's endurance you may look to the patience of the early Christians under persecution. They came away from the Sanhedrim to endure and bear; but it was to bear as conquerors rushing on to victory, preaching the truth with all boldness, and defying the power of the united world to silence them. These two diverse qualities are joined in One, and only One of woman born, in perfection. One there was in whom human nature was exhibited in all its elements symmetrically complete: One in whom, as I lately said, there met all that was manliest and all that was most womanly. His endurance of pain and grief was that of the woman rather than the man. A tender spirit dissolving into tears, meeting the dark hour not with the stern defiance of the man and the stoic, but with gentleness, and trust, and love, and shrinking, like a woman. But when it came to the question in Pilate's judgment-hall, or the mockeries of Herod's men of war, or the discussion with the Pharisees, or the exposure of the hollow falsehoods by which social, domestic, and religious life were sapped,

the woman has disappeared, and the hardy resolution of the Man, with more than manly daring, is found in her stead. This is the "patience" for us to cultivate: To bear and to persevere. However dark and profitless, however painful and weary, existence may have become; however any man, like Elijah, may be tempted to cast himself beneath the juniper-tree and say, "It is enough: now, O Lord!"—life is not done, and our Christian character is not won, so long as God has anything left for us to suffer, or anything left for us to do.

Patience, however, has another meaning. It is the opposite of that impatience which cannot *wait*. This is one of the difficulties of spiritual life. We are disappointed if the harvest do not come at once.

Last Tuesday, doubtless, you thought that all was done, and that there would be no more falling back.

Alas! a little experience will correct that. If the husbandman, disappointed at the delay which ensues before the blade breaks the soil, were to rake away the earth to examine if germination were going on, he would have a poor harvest. He must have "long patience, till he receive the early and the latter rain." The winter frost must mellow the seed lying in the genial bosom of the earth: the rains of spring must swell it, and the suns of summer mature it. So with you. It is the work of a long life to become a Christian. Many, O, many a time, are we tempted to say, "I make no progress at all. It is only failure after failure. Nothing grows." Now look at the sea when the flood is coming in. Go and stand by the sea-beach, and you will think that the ceaseless flux and reflux is but retrogression equal to the advance. But

look again in an hour's time, and the whole ocean has advanced. Every advance has been beyond the last, and every retrograde movement has been an imperceptible trifle less than the last. This is progress; to be estimated at the end of hours, not minutes. And this is *Christian* progress. Many a fluctuation, many a backward motion with a rush at times so vehement that all seems lost; but, if the Eternal work be real, every failure has been a real gain, and the next does not carry us so far back as we were before. Every advance is a real gain, and part of it is never lost. Both when we advance and when we fail, we gain. We are nearer to God than we were. The flood of spirit-life has carried us up higher on the everlasting shores, where the waves of life beat no more, and its fluctuations end, and all is safe at last. "This is the faith and patience of the saints."

It was because of the second of these requirements, Meditation, that I was anxious we should meet on Sunday next for an early communion, at eight o'clock. I desire that the candidates may have a more solemn and definite communion of their own, with few others present except their own relations and friends. In silence and quietness, we will meet together then. Before the world has put on its full robe of light, and before the busy gay crowd have begun to throng our streets, — before the distractions of the day begin, we will consecrate the early freshness of our souls — untrodden, unhardened, undissipated — to God. We will meet in the simplicity of brotherhood and sisterhood. We will have communion in a sacred meal which shall exhibit as nearly as may be the idea of family affection. Ye that are beginning life, and we who know

something of it,—ye that offer yourselves for the first time at that table, and we who, after sad experience and repeated failure, still *desire* again to renew our aspirations and our vows to Him,—we will come and breathe together that prayer, which I commended to you at your confirmation,—"Our Father which art in Heaven—lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

III.

JACOB'S WRESTLING.

CONFIRMATION LECTURE.

GEN. xxxii. 28, 29. — "And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there."

THE complexion of this story is peculiarly Jewish. It contained three points which were specially interesting to every Jew in a national point of view. It explained to him why he was called Israelite. It traced the origin of his own name, Israelite, to a distant ancestor, who had signally exhibited religious strength, and been, in the language of those times, a wrestler with God, from whence he had obtained the name Israel. It cast much deep and curious interest round an otherwise insignificant village, Peniel, where this transaction had taken place, and which derived its name from it, — Peniel, the face of God. And, besides, it explained the origin of a singular custom, which might seem a superstitious one, of not suffering a particular muscle to be eaten, and regarding it with a kind of religious awe, as the part in which Jacob was said by tradition to have been injured by the earnest tension of his frame during this

struggle. So far all is Jewish, narrow, merely of local interest. Besides this, much of the story is evidently mythical.

It is clear at once that it belongs to that earlier period of literature when traditions are preserved in a poetical shape, adapted to the rude conceptions of the day, but enshrining an inner and a deep truth. To disengage this truth from the form in which it is encased, is the duty of the expositor.

Now, putting aside the form of this narrative, and looking into the heart and meaning of it, it will become apparent that we have no longer anything infantine, or Jewish, or of limited interest, but a wide truth, — wide as human nature; and that there is before us the record of an inward spiritual struggle, as real now in the nineteenth century as then; as real in every earnest man as it was in the history of Jacob.

We take these points:

I. The nameless secret of Existence.

II. The revelation of that secret to the Soul.

The circumstances which preceded this event were these: More than twenty years before, Jacob had been guilty of a deliberate sin. He had deceived his father; he had over-reached his free-spirited, impetuous, open-hearted brother Esau. Never, during all those twenty years, had he seen the man whom he had injured. But now, on the point of returning to his native country, news was brought to him of his brother's approach, which made a meeting inevitable. Jacob made all his dispositions and arrangements to prepare for the worst. He sent over the brook Jabbok first the part of his family whom he valued least, and

who would be the first to meet Esau; then those whom he loved most, that, in the event of danger, they might have the greatest facility in escaping; then Jacob was left alone in the still, dark night. It was one of those moments in existence when a crisis is before us, to which great and pregnant issues are linked; when all has been done that foresight can devise, and, the hour of action being past, the instant of reäction has come. Then the soul is left passive and helpless, gazing face to face upon the anticipated and dreadful moment which is slowly moving on. It is in these hours that, having gone through in imagination the whole circle of our resources, and found them nothing, and ourselves powerless, as in the hands of a destiny, there comes a strange and nameless dread, a horrible feeling of insecurity, which gives the consciousness of a want, and forces us to feel out into the abyss for something that is mightier than flesh and blood to lean upon.

Then, therefore, it was that there came the moment of a conflict within the soul of Jacob, so terrible and so violent that it seemed an actual struggle with a living man. In the darkness he had heard a Voice, and came in contact with a Form, and felt a Presence, the reality of which there was no mistaking. Now, to the unscientific mind, that which is real seems to be necessarily material too. What wonder if, to the unscientific mind of Jacob, this conflict, so real, and attended in his person with such tangible results, seemed all human and material — a conflict with a tangible antagonist? What wonder if tradition preserved it in such a form? Suppose we admit that the Being whose awful presence Jacob felt had no Form

which could be grappled by a human hand, — is it less real for that? Are there no realities but those which the hand can touch and the eye see?

Jacob in that hour felt the dark secret and mystery of existence.

Upon this I shall make three remarks.

1. The first has reference to the contrast observable between this and a former revelation made to Jacob's soul. This was not the first time it had found itself face to face with God. Twenty years before, he had seen in vision a ladder reared against the sky, and angels ascending and descending on it. Exceedingly remarkable. Immediately after his transgression, when leaving his father's home, a banished man, to be a wanderer for many years, this first meeting took place. Fresh from his sin, God met him in tenderness and forgiveness. He saw the token which told him that all communication between heaven and earth was not severed. The way was clear and unimpeded still. Messages of reciprocated love might pass between the Father and His sinful child, as the angels in the dream ascended and descended on the visionary ladder. The possibility of saintliness was not forfeited. All *that* the Vision taught him. Then took place that touching Covenant, in which Jacob bound himself to serve gratefully his father's God, and vowed the vow of a consecrated heart to Him. All that was now past. After twenty years, God met him again; but this second intercourse was of a very different character. It was no longer God the Forgiver, God the Protector, God the covenanting Love, that met Jacob; but God the Awful, the Unnamable, whose breath blasts, and at whose touch

the flesh of the mortal shrinks and shrivels up. This is exactly the reverse of what might have been anticipated. You would have expected the darker vision of experience to come first. First the storm-struggle of the soul; then the Vision of Peace. It was exactly the reverse.

Yet all this, tried by experience, is a most true and living account. The awful feelings about Life and God are *not* those which characterize our earlier years. It is quite natural that, in the first espousals of the soul in its freshness to God, bright and hopeful feelings should be the predominant or the only ones. Joy marks, and ought to mark, early religion. Nay, by God's merciful arrangement, even sin is not that crushing thing in early life which it sometimes becomes in later years, when we mourn not so much a calculable number of sinful acts, as a deep, pervading sinfulness. Remorse does not corrode with its evil power then. Forgiveness is not only granted, but consciously and joyishly felt. It is as life matures that the weight of life, the burden of this unintelligible world, and the mystery of the hidden God, are felt.

A vast amount of insincerity is produced by mistaking this. We expect in the religion of the child the experience which can only be true in the religion of the man. We force into their lips the language which describes the wrestling of the soul with God. It is twenty years too soon. God, in his awfulness, the thought of mystery which scathes the soul — how can they know that yet, before they have got the thews and sinews of the man's heart to master such a thought? They know nothing yet — they ought to

know nothing yet — of God, but as the Father who is around their beds; they ought to see nothing yet but Heaven opened, and angels ascending and descending.

This morning, my young brethren, you presented yourselves at the Communion Table for the first time. Some of you, we trust, were conscious of meeting God. Only let us not confound the dates of Christian experience. If you did, it was not as Jacob met God on this occasion, but rather as he met Him on the earlier one. It were only a miserable forcing of insincerity upon you to require that this solemn, fearful sensation of his should be yours. Rather, we trust, you felt God present as the Lord of Love. A ladder was raised for you to Heaven. O! we trust that the feeling in some cases, at least, was this, — as of angels ascending and descending upon a child of God.

2. Again, I remark, that the end and aim of Jacob's struggle was to know the name of God. "Tell me, I pray thee, Thy Name." A very unimportant desire, at first sight. For what signifies a name? In these days, when names are only epithets, it signifies nothing. "Jehovah, Jove, or Lord," as the "Universal Prayer" insinuates, are all the same. Now, to assert that it matters not whether God be called Jehovah, Jove, or Lord, is true, if it mean this, that a devout and earnest heart is accepted by God, let the name be what it will by which He is addressed. But if it mean that Jove and Jehovah express the same Being, — that the character of Him whom the Pagan worshipped was the same as the character of Him whom Israel adored under the name of Jehovah, — that they refer

to the same group of ideas, — or that always names are but names, then we must look much deeper.

In the Hebrew history are discernible three periods distinctly marked, in which names and words bore very different characters. These three, it has been observed by acute philologists, correspond to the periods in which the nation bore the three different appellations of Hebrews, Israelites, Jews.

In the first of these periods, names meant truths, and words were the symbols of realities. The characteristics of the names given then were simplicity and sincerity. They were drawn from a few simple sources: either from some characteristic of the individual, as Jacob, the supplanter, or Moses, drawn from the water; or from the idea of family, as Benjamin, the son of my right hand; or from the conception of the tribe or nation, then gradually consolidating itself; or, lastly, from the religious idea of God. But in this case not the highest notion of God, — not Jah or Jehovah, but simply the earlier and simple idea of Deity: El. Israel, the prince of El; Peniel, the face of El.

In these days names were real, but the conceptions they contained were not the loftiest.

The second period begins about the time of the departure from Egypt, and it is characterized by unabated simplicity, with the addition of sublimer thought, and feeling more intensely religious. The heart of the nation was big with mighty and new religious truth, and the feelings with which the national heart was swelling found vent in the names which were given abundantly. God, under His name Jah, the noblest assemblage of spiritual truths yet conceived,

became the adjunct to names of places and persons. Oshea's name is changed into Jehoshua.

Observe, moreover, that in this period there was no fastidious, over-refined chariness in the use of that name. Men conscious of deep and real reverence are not fearful of the appearance of irreverence. The word became a common word, as it always may, so long as it is *felt*, and awe is *real*. A mighty cedar was called a cedar of Jehovah, — a lofty mountain, a mountain of Jehovah. Human beauty even was praised by such an epithet. Moses was divinely fair, beautiful to God. The Eternal Name became an adjunct. No beauty, no greatness, no goodness, was conceivable, except as emanating from Him: therefore His name was freely but most devoutly used.

Like the earlier period, in this, too, words mean realities; but, unlike the earlier period, they are impregnated with deeper religious thought.

The third period was at its zenith in the time of Christ: — words had lost their meaning, and shared the hollow, unreal state of all things. A man's name might be Judas, and still he might be a traitor. A man might be called Pharisee, exclusively religious, and yet the name might only cover the hollowness of hypocrisy; or, he might be called most noble Festus, and be the meanest tyrant that ever sat upon a proconsular chair. This is the period in which every keen and wise observer knows that the decay of national religious feeling has begun. That decay in the meaning of words, that lowering of the standard of the ideas for which they stand, is a certain mark of this. The debasement of a language is a sure mark of the debasement of a nation. The insincerity of a

language is a proof of the insincerity of a nation; for a time comes in the history of a nation when words no longer stand for things; when names are given for the sake of an euphonious sound, and when titles are but the epithets of unmeaning courtesy;—a time when Majesty, Defender of the Faith, Most Noble, Worshipful, and Honorable, not only mean nothing, but do not flush the cheek with the shame of convicted falsehood when they are worn as empty ornaments.

The Name of God shares this fate. A nation may reach the state in which the Eternal Name can be used to point a sentence, or adorn a familiar conversation, and no longer shock the ear with the sound of blasphemy, because in good truth the Name no longer stands for the Highest, but for a meaner conception, an idol of the debased mind. *E. g.* In a foreign language, the language of a light and irreligious people, the Eternal Name can be used as a light expletive and conversational ejaculation, and not shock any religious sensibility. You could not do that in English. It would sound like a blasphemy to say, in light talk, My God! or, Good God! Your flesh would creep at hearing it. But in that language the word has lost its sacredness, because it has lost its meaning. It means no more than Jove or Baal. It means a Being whose existence has become a nursery fable.. No marvel that we are taught to pray, "Hallowed be Thy Name." We cannot pray a deeper prayer for our country than to say, Never may that Name in English stand for a lower idea than it stands for now. There is a solemn power in words, because words are the expression of character. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Yet, in this period, exactly in proportion as the solemnity of the idea was gone, reverence was scrupulously paid to the corpse-like word which remained and had once enclosed it. In that hollow, artificial age, the Jew would wipe his pen before he ventured to write the Name—he would leave out the vowels of the sacred Jehovah, and substitute those of the less sacred Elohim. In that kind of age, too, men bow to the name of Jesus often just in that proportion in which they have ceased to recognize His true grandeur and majesty of character.

In such an age, it would be indeed preposterous to spend the strength upon an inquiry such as this:—"Tell me Thy Name?" Jehovah, Jove, or Lord—what matter? But Jacob did not live in this third period, when names meant nothing; nor did he live in the second, when words contained the deepest truth the nation is ever destined to receive. But he lived in the first age, when men are sincere, and truthful, and earnest, and names exhibit character. To tell Jacob the Name of God was to reveal to him what God is, and who.

3. I observe a third thing. This desire of Jacob's was not the one we should naturally have expected on such an occasion. He is alone; his past fault is coming retributively on a guilty conscience; he dreads the meeting with his brother. His soul is agonized with *that*, and *that* we naturally expect will be the subject and the burden of his prayer. No such thing! Not a word about Esau—not a word about personal danger at all. All that is banished completely for the time, and deeper thoughts are grappling with his soul. To get safe through to-morrow? No, no

no! To be blessed by God — to know Him, and what He is — that is the battle of Jacob's soul from sunset till the dawn of day.

And that is our struggle — *the* struggle. Let any true man go down into the deeps of his own being, and answer us, — What is the cry that comes from the most real part of his nature? Is it the cry for daily bread? Jacob asked for that in his *first* communing with God — preservation, safety. Is it even this, — to be forgiven our sins? Jacob had a sin to be forgiven, and in that most solemn moment of his existence he did not say a syllable about it. Or is it this, — "Hallowed be Thy Name"? No, my brethren. Out of our frail and yet sublime humanity, the demand that rises in the earthlier hours of our religion may be this, — Save my soul; but in the most unearthly moments it is this, — "Tell me Thy Name." We move through a world of mystery; and the deepest question is, — What is the Being that is ever near, sometimes felt, never seen; that which has haunted us from childhood with a dream of something surpassingly fair, which has never yet been realized; that which sweeps through the soul at times as a desolation, like the blast from the wings of the Angel of Death, leaving us stricken and silent in our loneliness; that which has touched us in our tenderest point, and the flesh has quivered with agony, and our mortal affections have shrivelled up with pain; that which comes to us in aspirations of nobleness, and conceptions of superhuman excellence? Shall we say It, or He? What is It? Who is He? Those anticipations of Immortality and God — what are they? Are they the mere throbbings of my own heart, heard and mistaken for a liv-

ng something beside me? Are they the sound of my own wishes echoing through the vast void of Nothingness? or, shall I call them God, Father, Spirit, Love? A living Being within me or outside me? Tell me Thy Name, thou awful mystery of Loveliness! That is the struggle of all earnest life.

We come now to

II. The revelation of the Mystery.

1. It was revealed by awe. Very significantly are we told that the Divine antagonist seemed as it were anxious to depart, as the day was about to dawn; and that Jacob held him more convulsively fast, as if aware that the daylight was likely to rob him of his anticipated blessing; in which there seems concealed a very deep truth. God is approached more nearly in that which is indefinite than in that which is definite and distinct. He is felt in awe, and wonder, and worship, rather than in clear conceptions. There is a sense in which darkness has more of God than light has. He dwells in the thick darkness. Moments of tender, vague mystery often bring distinctly the feeling of His presence. When day breaks and distinctness comes, the Divine has evaporated from the soul like morning dew. In sorrow, haunted by uncertain presentiments, we feel the Infinite around us. The gloom disperses, the world's joy comes again; and it seems as if God were gone — the Being who had touched us with a withering hand, wrestled with us, yet whose presence, even when most terrible, was more blessed than His absence. It is true, even literally, that the darkness reveals God. Every morning God draws the curtain of the garish light across His eternity, and we lose the Infinite. We look down on earth instead

of up to heaven; on a narrower and more contracted spectacle — that which is examined by the microscope when the telescope is laid aside — smallness, instead of vastness. "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor till the evening;" and in the dust and pettiness of life we seem to cease to behold Him. Then at night He undraws the curtain again, and we see how much of God and Eternity the bright, distinct day had hidden from us. Yes, in solitary, silent, vague darkness, the Awful One is near.

This morning, young brethren, we endeavored to act on this belief — we met in stillness, before the full, broad glare of day had rested on our world. Your first communion implored His blessing in the earlier hour which seems so peculiarly His. Before the dull, and deadening, and earthward influences of the world had dried up the dew of fresh morning feeling, you tried to fortify your souls with a sense of His presence. This night, before to-morrow's light shall dawn, pray that He will not depart until He has left upon your hearts the blessing of a strength which shall be yours through the garish day, and through dry, scorching life, even to the close of your days.

2. Again; this revelation was made in an unsyllabled blessing. Jacob requested two things. He asked for a blessing, and he prayed to know the Name of God. God gave him the blessing. "He blessed him there," but refused to tell his Name. "Wherefore dost thou ask after my Name?"

In this, too, seems to lie a most important truth. Names have a power, a strange power, of hiding God. Speech has been bitterly defined as the art of hiding thought. Well, that sarcastic definition has in it

truth. The Eternal Word is the Revealer of God's thought; and every true word of man is originally the expression of a thought; but by degrees the word hides the thought. Language is valuable for the things of this life; but for the things of the other world, it is an encumbrance almost as much as an assistance. Words often hide from us our ignorance of even earthly truth. The child asks for information, and we satiate his curiosity with words. Who does not know how we satisfy ourselves with the name of some strange bird or plant, or the name of some new law in nature? It is a mystery perplexing us before. We get the name, and fancy we understand something more than we did before; but, in truth, we are more hopelessly ignorant; for before we felt there was a something we had not attained, and so we inquired and searched; now, we fancy we possess it, because we have got the name by which it is known; and the word covers over the abyss of our ignorance. If Jacob had got a *word*, that word might have satisfied him. He would have said, Now I understand God, and know all about Him.

Besides, names and words soon lose their meaning. In the process of years and centuries the meaning dies off them, like the sunlight from the hills. The hills are there — the color and life are gone. The words of that creed, for example, which we read last Sunday (the Athanasian), were living words a few centuries ago. They have changed their meaning, and are, to ninety-nine out of every hundred, only dead words. Yet men tenaciously hold to the expressions of which they do not understand the meaning, and which have a very different meaning now from that they had once —

Person, Procession, Substance; and they are almost worse with them than without them, for they conceal their ignorance, and place a barrier against the earnestness of inquiry. We repeat the creed by rote, and the profound truths of Being which the creed contains, how many of us understand?

All this affords an instructive lesson to parents and to teachers. In the education of a pupil or a child, the wise way is to deal with him as God dealt with His pupil, the child-man Jacob; for before the teaching of God, the wisest man — what is he but a child? God's plan was not to give names and words, but truths of feeling. That night, in that strange scene, He impressed on Jacob's soul a religious awe which was hereafter to develop, — not a set of formal expressions, which would have satisfied with husks the cravings of the intellect, and shut up the soul: — Jacob felt the Infinite, who is more truly felt when least named. Words would have reduced that to the Finite: for, O! to know all about God is one thing — to know the living God is another. Our rule seems to be this: Let a child's religion be expansive — capable of expansion — as little systematic as possible: let it lie upon the heart like the light, loose soil, which can be broken through as the heart bursts into fuller life. If it be trodden down hard and stiff in formularies, it is more than probable that the whole must be burst through, and broken violently, and thrown off altogether, when the soul requires room to germinate.

And in this way, my young brethren, I have tried to deal with you. Not in creeds, nor even in the stiffness of the catechism, has truth been put before you. Rather has it been trusted to the impulses of the

heart; on which, we believe, God works more efficaciously than we can do. A few simple truths: and then these have been left to work, and germinate, and swell. Baptism reveals to you this truth for the heart, that God is your Father, and that Christ has encouraged you to live as your Father's children. It has revealed that name which Jacob knew not—Love. Confirmation has told you another truth, that of self-dedication to Him. Heaven is the service of God. The highest blessedness of life is powers and self consecrated to His will. These are the germs of truth: but it would have been miserable self-delusion, and most pernicious teaching, to have aimed at exhausting truth, or systematizing it. We are jealous of over-systematic teaching. God's love to you—the sacrifice of your lives to God—but the meaning of that? O! a long, long life will not exhaust the meaning—the Name of God. Feel Him more and more—all else is but empty words.

Lastly, the effect of this Revelation was to change Jacob's character. His name was changed from Jacob to Israel, because himself was an altered man. Hitherto there had been something subtle in his character—a certain cunning and craft—a want of breadth, as if he had no firm footing upon reality. The forgiveness of God twenty years before had not altered this. He remained Jacob, the subtle supplanter, still. For, indeed, a man whose religion is chiefly the sense of forgiveness does not thereby rise into integrity or firmness of character—a certain tenderness of character may very easily go along with a great deal of subtlety. Jacob was tender and devout, and grateful for God's pardon, and only half honest still. But this half-insin-

cere man is brought into contact with the awful God, and his subtlety falls from him. He becomes real at once. Every insincere habit of mind shrivels in the face of God. One clear, true glance into the depths of Being, and the whole man is altered. The name changes because the character has changed. No longer Jacob the supplanter, but Israel the Prince of God — the champion of the Lord, who had fought *with* God and conquered; and who, henceforth, will fight *for* God, and be His true, loyal soldier: a larger, more unselfish name — a larger and more unselfish man — honest and true, at last. No man becomes honest till he has got face to face with God. There is a certain insincerity about us all — a something dramatic. One of those dreadful moments which throw us upon ourselves, and strip off the hollowness of our outside show, must come before the insincere is true.

And again, young brethren, such a moment, at least of truthfulness, ought to have been this morning. Let the old pass. Let the name of the world pass into the Christian name. Baptism and Confirmation: the one gives, and the other reminds us of the giving of a better name and a truer. Henceforth be men. Lose the natural frailty, whatever it is. See God, and you *will* lose it.

To conclude; here is a question for each man separately, — What is the name of your God? Not in the sense of this age, but in the sense of Jacob's age. What is the *Name* of the Deity you worship? In the present modern sense of Name, by which nothing more than epithet is meant, of course the reply is easy. The name of yours is the God of Christian worship — the three-fold One — the author of Exist-

ence, manifested in Divine humanity, commingling with us as pure spirit — the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. That, of course, you say is the name of your God. Now, put away names — give words to the winds. What do you adore in your heart of hearts? What is the name oftenest on your lips in your unfettered, spontaneous moments? If we overheard your secret thoughts, who and what is it which is to you the greatest and the best that you would desire to realize? The character of the rich man, or the successful, or the admired? Would the worst misery which could happen to you be the wreck of property — the worst shame, not to have done wrong, but to have sunk in the estimation of society? Then, in the classifications of earth, which separate men into Jews, Christians, Mahometans, &c., you may rank as a worshipper of the Christian's God. But in the nomenclature of heaven, where names cannot stand for things, God sees you as an idolater — your highest is not His highest. The Name that is above every name is not the description of your God.

For life and death we have made our choice. The life of Christ — the life of truth and love; and if it must be, as the result of that, the Cross of Christ, with the obloquy and shame that wait on truth — that is the name before which we bow. In this world "there are Gods many, and Lords many; but to us there is one Lord, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

IV.

[Preached August 12th, 1849.]

CHRISTIAN PROGRESS BY OBLIVION OF THE PAST.

PHIL. iii. 13, 14. — "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

THE first thing which strikes us, on reading these verses, is, that the Apostle Paul places himself on a level with the persons whom he addresses. He speaks to them as frail, weak men; and he gives them in himself a specimen of what frailty and weakness can achieve in the strength of Christ. And it is for this reason that the passage before us is one of the most encouraging in all the writings of St. Paul. For there is one aspect in which the apostle is presented to us, which is, perhaps, a depressing one. When we look at his almost superhuman career, reverence and admiration we must feel; but so far does he seem removed from ordinary life, that imitation appears out of the question. Let us select but two instances of this discouraging aspect of the apostle's life. Most of us know the feeling of unaccountable depression which rests upon us when we find ourselves alone in a foreign town, with its tide of population ebbing and flowing

past us, a mass of human life in which we ourselves are nothing. But that was Paul's daily existence. He had consecrated himself to an almost perpetual exile. He had given up the endearments of domestic life forever. Home, in this world, St. Paul had none. With a capacity for the tenderest feelings of our nature, he had chosen for his lot the task of living among strangers, and as soon as they ceased to be strangers quitting them again. He went on month by month attaching congregations to himself, and month by month dooming himself to severance. And yet, I know not that we read of one single trace of depression or discouragement suffered to rest on the apostle's mind. He seems to have been ever fresh and sanguine, the salient energy of his soul rising above the need of all human sympathy. It is the magnificent spectacle of missionary life, with more than missionary loneliness. There is something almost awful in the thought of a man who was so thoroughly in the next world that he needed not the consolations of this world. And yet, observe, there is nothing encouraging for us in this. It is very grand to look upon, very commanding, very full of awe; but it is so much above us, so little like anything human that we know of, that we content ourselves with gazing on him as on the gliding swallow's flight, which we wonder at, but never think of imitating.

Now, let us look at one other feature in St. Paul's character—his superiority to those temptations which are potent with ordinary men. We say nothing of his being above the love of money: of his indifference to a life of comfort and personal indulgence. Those temptations only assail the lower part of our nature;

and it is not saintliness to be above these: common excellence is impossible otherwise. But when we come to look for those temptations which master the higher and the nobler man,—ambition, jealousy, pride,—it is not that we see them conquered by the apostle; they scarcely seem to have even lodged in his bosom at all. It was open to the apostle, if he had felt the ambition, to make for himself a name,—to become the leader of a party in Corinth and in the world. And yet remember we not how sternly he put down the thought, and how he labored to merge his individuality in the cause, and make himself an equal of inferior men? "Who, then, is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers, servants, by whom ye believed?"

Again, in respect of jealousy. Jealousy seems almost inseparable from human love. It is but the other side of love, the shadow cast by the light when the darker body intervenes. There came to him in prison that most cutting of all news to a minister's heart, that others were trying to supplant him in the affections of his converts. But his was that lofty love which cares less for reciprocation than for the well-being of the objects loved. The rival teachers were teaching from emulation; still they could not but bless by preaching to his disciples. What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, "Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Not a trace of jealousy in these words.

Once more: Degrading things were laid to his charge. The most liberal-minded of mankind was charged with bigotry. The most generous of men

was suspected of avarice. If ever pride were venial, it had been then. Yet read through the whole of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and say if one spark of pride be visible. He might have shut himself up in high and dignified silence; he might have refused to condescend to solicit a renewal of the love which had once grown cold; and yet we look in vain for the symptoms of offended pride. Take this one passage as a specimen: "Behold this third time I am willing to come unto you . . . and I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am beloved."

In this there is very little encouragement. A man so thoroughly above human resentment, human passions, human weakness, does not seem to us an example. The nearer humanity approaches a perfect standard, the less does it command our sympathy. A man must be weak before we can feel encouraged to attempt what he has done. It is not the Redeemer's sinlessness, nor His unconquerable fidelity to duty, nor His superhuman nobleness, that win our desire to imitate. Rather His tears at the grave of friendship, His shrinking from the sharpness of death, and the feeling of human doubt which swept across His soul like a desolation — these make him one of us, and therefore our example.

And it is on this account that this passage seems to us so full of encouragement. It is the precious picture of a frail and struggling apostle — precious both to the man and to the minister. To the man, because it tells him that what we feel Paul felt, — imperfect, feeble, far from what he would wish to be; yet with sanguine hope, expecting progress in the saintly

life. Precious to the minister, because it tells him that his very weakness may be subservient to a people's strength. Not in his transcendent gifts, not in his saintly endowments, not even in his apostolic devotedness, is St. Paul so close to our hearts as when he makes himself one with us, and says, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended." And we know not how otherwise any minister could hope to do good, when he addresses men who are infinitely his superiors in almost everything. We know not how else he could urge on to a sanctity which he has not himself attained; we know not how he could dare to speak severely of weaknesses by which he himself is overpowered, and passions of which he feels himself all the terrible tyranny, if it were not that he expects to have tacitly understood that in his own case which the apostle urged in every form of expression: Brethren, be as I am, for I am as ye are — struggling, baffled, but panting for emancipation.

We confine ourselves to two subjects:

I. The apostle's object in this life.

II. The means which he used for attaining it.

I. The apostle's object or aim in this life was "perfection." In the verse before — "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Perfection was his unreached mark.

And less than this no Christian can aim at. There are given to us "exceeding great and precious promises," that by means of these we might be partakers of the Divine Nature. Not to be equal to the standard of our day, nor even to surpass it; not to be superior to the men amongst whom we live; not to

forgive those who have little to be forgiven; not to love our friends: but to be the children of our Father; to be pure even as Christ is pure; to be "perfect even as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

It is easily perceivable why this perfection is unattainable in this life. Faultlessness is conceivable, being merely the negation of evil. But perfection is positive, the attainment of all conceivable excellence. It is long as Eternity, — expansive as God. Perfection is our mark: yet never will the aim be so true and steady as to strike the golden centre. Perfection of character, yet even to the dying hour it will be but this, — "I count not myself to have apprehended." Christian life is like those questions in mathematics which never can be exactly answered. All you can attain is an approximation to the truth. You may labor on for years and never reach it; yet your labor is not in vain. Every figure you add makes the fraction nearer than the last to the million millionth; and so it is with holiness. Christ is our mark — the perfect standard of God in Christ. But, be as holy as you will, there is a step nearer, and another, and another, and so infinitely on.

To this object the apostle gave himself with singleness of aim. "*This one thing I do.*" The life of man is a vagrant, changeful desultoriness; like that of children sporting on an enamelled meadow, chasing now a painted butterfly, which loses its charm by being caught; now a wreath of mist, which falls damp upon the hand with disappointment; now a feather of thistle-down, which is crushed in the grasp. In the midst of all this fickleness, St. Paul had found a purpose to which he gave the undivided energy of his

soul. "This one thing I do,"—"I press toward the mark."

This is intelligible enough in the case of a minister; for, whether he be in the pulpit, or beside a sick man's bed, or furnishing his mind in the study, evidently and unmistakably it is his profession to be doing only one thing. But in the manifold life of the man of the world, and business, it is not so easy to understand how this can be carried out. To answer this, we observe there is a difference between doing and being. Perfection is being, not doing; it is not to effect an act, but to achieve a character. If the aim of life were to do something, then, as in an earthly business, except in doing this one thing the business would be at a stand-still. The student is not doing the one thing of student-life when he has ceased to think or read. The laborer leaves his work undone when the spade is not in his hand, and he sits beneath the hedge to rest. But in Christian life every moment and every act is an opportunity for doing the one thing of *becoming* Christ-like. Every day is full of a most impressive experience. Every temptation to evil temper which can assail us to-day will be an opportunity to decide the question whether we shall gain the calmness and the rest of Christ, or whether we shall be tossed by the restlessness and agitation of the world. Nay, the very vicissitudes of the seasons, day and night, heat and cold, affecting us variably, and producing exhilaration or depression, are so contrived as to conduce towards the being which we become, and decide whether we shall be masters of ourselves, or whether we shall be swept at the mercy of accident and circumstance, miserably susceptible of merely outward

influences. Infinite as are the varieties of life, so manifold are the paths to saintly character: and he who has not found out how directly or indirectly to make everything converge towards his soul's sanctification, has as yet missed the meaning of this life.

In pressing towards this "mark," the apostle attained a prize; and here I offer an observation, which is not one of mere subtlety of refinement, but deeply practical. The mark was perfection of character; the prize was blessedness. But the apostle did not aim at the prize of blessedness: he aimed at the mark of perfectness. In becoming perfect he attained happiness, but his primary aim was not happiness.

We may understand this by an illustration. In student-life there are those who seek knowledge for its own sake, and there are those who seek it for the sake of the prize, and the honor, and the subsequent success in life that knowledge brings. To those who seek knowledge for its own sake, the labor is itself reward. Attainment is the highest reward. Doubtless the prize stimulates exertion,—encourages and forms a part of the motive, but only a subordinate one: and knowledge would still have "a price above rubies," if there were no prize at all. They who seek knowledge for the sake of a prize are not genuine lovers of knowledge: they only love the rewards of knowledge: had it no honor or substantial advantage connected with it, they would be indolent.

Applying this to our subject, I say this is a spurious goodness which is good for the sake of reward. The child that speaks the truth for the sake of the praise of truth is not truthful. The man who is honest because honesty is the best policy has not integrity in

nis heart. He who endeavors to be humble, and holy, and perfect, in order to win heaven, has only a counterfeit religion. God for His own sake, Goodness because it is good, Truth because it is lovely,—this is the Christian's aim. The prize is only an incentive. inseparable from success, but not the aim itself.

With this limitation, however, we remark, that it is a Christian duty to dwell much more on the thought of future blessedness than most men do. If ever the apostle's steps began to flag, the radiant diadem before him gave new vigor to his heart; and we know how at the close of his career the vision became more vivid and more entrancing. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory! It is our privilege, if we are on our way to God, to keep steadily before us the thought of home. Make it a matter of habit. Force yourselves at night, alone, in the midst of the world's bright sights, to pause to think of the heaven which is yours. Let it calm you, and ennoble you, and give you cheerfulness to endure. It was so that Moses was enabled to live amongst all the fascinations of his courtly life with a heart unseduced from his laborious destiny. By faith . . . . "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Why? "For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." It was so that our Master strengthened His human soul for its sharp earthly endurance. "For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame." If we would become heavenly-minded, we must let the imagination realize the blessedness to which we are moving on. Let us think much of rest,—the rest which is not of indolence, but of powers in perfect equilibrium; the rest which

is deep as summer midnight, yet full of life and force as summer sunshine — the Sabbath of Eternity. Let us think of the love of God, which we shall feel in its full tide upon our souls. Let us think of that marvellous career of sublime occupation which shall belong to the spirits of just men made perfect; when we shall fill a higher place in God's universe, and more consciously, and with more distinct insight, coöperate with God in the rule over His Creation. "I press toward the mark — for the prize."

II. We pass to our second topic; the means which Paul found available for the attainment of Divine and perfect character. His great principle was to forget the things which were behind, and to reach forward to the things which were before. The wisdom of a Divine life lies hid in this principle. I shall endeavor to expand the sentiment to make it intelligible.

What are the things behind, which are to be forgotten?

1. If we would progress in Christian life, we must forget the days of innocence that lie behind us. Let not this be misunderstood. Innocent, literally, no man ever is. We come into the world with tendencies to evil; but there was a time in our lives when those were only tendencies. A proneness to sin we had; but we had not yet sinned. The moment had not yet arrived when that cloud settles down upon the heart which in all of after-life is never entirely removed; the sense of guilt, the anguish of lost innocence, the restless feeling of a heart no longer pure. Popularly, we call that innocence; and when men become bitterly aware that early innocence of heart is gone,

they feel as if all were lost, and so look back to what they reckon holier days with a peculiar fondness of regret. I believe there is much that is merely feeble and sentimental in this regret. Our early innocence is nothing more than ignorance of evil. Christian life is not a retaining of that ignorance of evil, nor even a returning of it again. We lose our mere negative sinlessness. We put on our firm, manly holiness. Human innocence is not to know evil: — Christian saintliness is to know evil and good, and prefer good. It is possible for a parent, with over-fastidious refinement, to prolong the duration of this innocence unnaturally. He may lock up his library, and prevent the entrance to forbidden books; he may exercise a jealous censorship over every book and every companion that comes into the house; he may remove the public journal from the table, lest an eye may chance to rest upon the contaminating portion of its pages; but he has only put off the evil hour. He has sent into the world a young man of eighteen or twenty, ignorant as a child of evil, but not innocent as an angel who abhors the evil. No, we cannot get back our past ignorance, neither is it desirable we should. No sane mind wishes for that which is impossible. And it is no more to be regretted than the blossom is to be regretted when fruit is hardening in its place; no more to be regretted than the slender gracefulness of the sapling, when you have got instead the woody fibre of the heart of oak of which the ship is made; no more to be regretted than the green blade when the ear has come instead, bending down in yellow ripeness. Our innocence is gone, withered with the business-like contact with the great world. It is one of the things

behind. Forget it. It was worth very little. And now for something of a texture more firm, more enduring. We will not mourn over the loss of simplicity, if we have got instead souls indurated by experience, — disciplined, even by fall, to refuse the evil and to choose the good.

2. In the next place, it is wise to forget our days of youth. Up to a certain period of life it is the tendency of man to look forwards. There is a marvellous prodigality with which we throw away our present happiness when we are young, which belongs to those who feel that they are rich in happiness, and never expect to be bankrupts. It almost seems one of the signatures of our immortality that we squander time as if there were a dim consciousness that we are in possession of an eternity of it; but as we arrive at middle age, it is the tendency of man to look back. To a man of middle life, existence is no longer a dream, but a reality. He has not much more new to look forward to, for the character of his life is generally fixed by that time. His profession, his home, his occupations, will be for the most part what they are now. He will make few new acquaintances, — no new friends. It is the solemn thought connected with middle age that life's last business is begun in earnest; and it is then, midway between the cradle and the grave, that a man begins to look back and marvel, with a kind of remorseful feeling, that he let the days of youth go by so half-enjoyed. It is the pensive autumn feeling, — it is the sensation of half-sadness that we experience when the longest day of the year is past, and every day that follows is shorter, and the lights fainter, and the feebler shadows tell that nature is hastening with gigantic foot

steps to her winter grave. So does man look back upon his youth. When the first gray hairs become visible, — when the unwelcome truth fastens itself upon the mind that a man is no longer going up the hill, but down, and that the sun is already westering, — he looks back on things behind. Now, this is a natural feeling, but is it the high Christian tone of feeling? In the spirit of this verse, we may assuredly answer, No. We who have an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, what have we to do with things past? When we were children we thought as children. But now there lies before us manhood, with its earnest work: and then old age, and then the grave, and then home. And so manhood in the Christian life is a better thing than boyhood, because it is a riper thing; and old age ought to be a brighter, and a calmer, and a more serene thing than manhood. There is a second youth for man, better and holier than his first, if he will look on, and not back. There is a peculiar simplicity of heart, and a touching singleness of purpose, in Christian old age, which has ripened gradually, and not fitfully. It is then that to the wisdom of the serpent is added the harmlessness of the dove; it is then that to the firmness of manhood is joined almost the gentleness of womanhood; it is then that the somewhat austere and sour character of growing strength, moral and intellectual, mellows into the rich ripeness of an old age made sweet and tolerant by experience; it is then that man returns to first principles. There comes a love more pure and deep than the boy could ever feel; there comes a conviction, with a strength beyond that which the boy could ever know, that the earliest lesson of life is infinite, Christ is all in all.

3. Again; it is wise to forget past errors. There is a kind of temperament which, when indulged, greatly hinders growth in real godliness. It is that rueful, repentant, self-accusing temper, which is always looking back, and microscopically observing how that which is done might have been better done. Something of this we ought to have. A Christian ought to feel always that he has partially failed, but that ought not to be the only feeling. Faith ought ever to be a sanguine, cheerful thing; and, perhaps, in practical life we could not give a better account of faith than by saying that it is amidst much failure having the heart to try again. Our best deeds are marked by imperfection; but, if they really were our best, "forget the things that are behind," — we shall do better next time.

Under this head we include all those mistakes which belong to our circumstances. We can all look back to past life and see mistakes that have been made, — to a certain extent, perhaps, irreparable ones. We can see where our education was fatally misdirected. The profession chosen for you perhaps was not the fittest; or, you are out of place, and many things might have been better ordered. Now, on this apostolic principle, it is wise to forget all that. It is not by regretting what is irreparable that true work is to be done, but by making the best of what we are. It is not by complaining that we have not the right tools, but by using well the tools we have. What we are, and where we are, is God's providential arrangement — God's doing, though it may be man's misdoing; and the manly and the wise way is to look your disadvantages in the face, and see what can be made out of them. Life, like war, is a series of mistakes; and he is not the best Christian nor

the best general who makes the fewest false steps. Poor mediocrity may secure that; but he is the best who wins the most splendid victories by the retrieval of mistakes. Forget mistakes: organize victory out of mistakes.

Finally; past guilt lies behind us, and is well forgotten. There is a way in which even sin may be banished from the memory. If a man looks forward to the evil he is going to commit, and satisfies himself that it is inevitable, and so treats it lightly, he is acting as a fatalist. But, if a man partially does this, looking backward, feeling that sin when it is past has become part of the history of God's universe, and is not to be wept over forever, he only does that which the Giver of the Gospel permits him to do. Bad as the results have been in the world of making light of sin, those of brooding over it too much have been worse. Remorse has done more harm than even hardihood. It was remorse which fixed Judas in an unalterable destiny; it was remorse which filled the monasteries for ages with men and women whose lives became useless to their fellow-creatures. It is remorse which so remembers bygone faults as to paralyze the energies for doing Christ's work; for when you break a Christian's spirit, it is all over with progress. O, we want everything that is hopeful and encouraging for our work, for God knows it is not an easy one! And therefore it is that the Gospel comes to the guiltiest of us all, at the very outset, with the inspiring news of pardon. You remember how Christ treated sin. Sin of oppression and hypocrisy indignantly; but sin of frailty — "'Hath no man condemned thee?'—'No man, Lord.—"Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.'" As if he would

bid us think more of what we may be than of what we have been. There was the wisdom of life in the proverb with which the widow of Tekoah pleaded for the restoration of Absalom from banishment before David. Absalom had slain his brother Amnon. Well, Amnon was dead before his time; but the severity of revenge could never bring him back again. "We must all die," said the wise woman, "and are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." Christian brethren, *do not stop too long to weep over spilt water.* Forget your guilt, and wait to see what Eternity has to say to it. You have other work to do now.

So let us work out the spirit of the apostle's plan. Innocence, youth, success, error, guilt—let us forget them all.

Not backward are our glances bent,
But onwards to our Father's home

In conclusion, remember Christian progress is only possible in Christ. It is a very lofty thing to be a Christian; for a Christian is a man who is restoring God's likeness to his character; and therefore the apostle calls it here a high calling. High as heaven is the calling wherewith we are called. But this very height makes it seem impracticable. It is natural to say, All that was well enough for one so transcendently gifted as Paul to hope for; but I am no gifted man; I have no iron strength of mind; I have no sanguine hopefulness of character; I am disposed to look on the dark side of things; I am undetermined, weak, vacillating; and then I have a whole army of passions and follies to contend with. We have to remind such men of one thing they have forgotten. It is the high calling of

God, if you will; but it is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. What the world calls virtue is a name and dream without Christ. The foundation of all human excellence must be laid deep in the blood of the Redeemer's cross, and in the power of his Resurrection. First let a man know that all his past is wrong and sinful; then let him fix his eye on the love of God in Christ loving him, — even him, the guilty one. Is there no strength in that? no power in the knowledge that all that is gone by is gone, and that a fresh, clear future is open? It is not the progress of virtue that God asks for, but progress in saintliness, empowered by hope and love.

Lastly, let each man put this question to himself, "Dare I look on?" With an earnest Christian, it is "reaching forth to those things which are before." Progress ever. And then, just as we go to rest in this world tired, and wake up fresh and vigorous in the morning, so does the Christian go to sleep in the world's night, weary with the work of life, and then, on the resurrection day, he wakes in his second and his brighter morning. It is well for a believer to look on. Dare you? Remember, out of Christ, it is not wisdom, but madness, to look on. You must look back, for the longest and the best day is either past or passing. It will be winter soon, — desolate, uncheered, hopeless winter, — old age, with its dreariness and its disappointment, and its querulous broken-heartedness; and there is no second spring for you, — no resurrection morning of blessedness to dawn on the darkness of your grave. God has only one method of salvation, the Cross of Christ. God can have only one; for the Cross of Christ means death to evil, life to good

There is no other way to salvation but that, for that in itself is, and alone is, salvation. Out of Christ, therefore, it is woe to the man who reaches forth to the things which are before. To such I say, — My unhappy brethren, Omnipotence itself cannot change the darkness of your destiny.

V.

[Preached October 20, 1850.]

TRIUMPH OVER HINDRANCES. — ZACCHEUS.

LUKE xix. 8. — "And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold."

THERE are persons to whom a religious life seems smooth and easy. Gifted by God constitutionally with a freedom from those inclinations which in other men are tyrannous and irresistible, — endued with those aspirations which other men seem to lack, — it appears as if they were born saints.

There are others to whom it is all a trial, — a whole world of passions keep up strife within. The name of the Spirit which possesses them is Legion. It is hard fight from the cradle to the grave, — up-hill work, — toil all the way; and at the last it seems as if they had only just kept their ground.

There are circumstances which seem as if intended as a very hot-bed for the culture of religious principle, in which the difficulty appears to be to escape being religious.

There are others in which religious life seems impossible. For the soul, tested by temptation, is like iron tried by weights. No iron bar is absolutely in-

frangible. Its strength is tested by the weight which it will bear without breaking. No soul is absolutely impeccable. It seems as if all we can dare to ask, even of the holiest, is, how much temptation he can bear without giving way. There are societies amidst which some are forced to dwell daily, in which the very idea of Christian rest is negatived. There are occupations in which purity of heart can scarcely be conceived. There are temptations to which some are subjected in a long series, in which to have stood upright would have demanded not a man's but an angel's strength.

Here are two cases: one in which temperament and circumstances are favorable to religion; another, in which both are adverse. If life were always the brighter side of these pictures, the need of Christian instruction and Christian casuistry, — that is, the direction for conduct under various supposable cases, — would be superseded. The end of the institution of a Church would be gone; for the Church exists for the purposes of mutual sympathy and mutual support. But the fact is, life is for the most part a path of varied trial. How to lead the life divine surrounded by temptations from within and from without, — how to breathe freely the atmosphere of heaven, while the feet yet touch earth, — how to lead the life of Christ, who shrunk from no scene of trying duty, and took the temptations of man's life as they came, — or how even to lead the ordinary saintly life, winning experience from fall, and permanent strength out of momentary weakness, and victory out of defeat, — this is the problem.

The possibility of such a life is guaranteed by the

history of Zaccheus. Zaccheus was tempted much, and Zaccheus contrived to be a servant of Christ. If we wanted a motto to prefix to this story, we should append this: — The successful pursuit of religion under difficulties.

These, then, are the two branches of our thoughts to-day:

I. The hindrances to a religious life.

II. The Christian triumph over difficulties.

I. The hindrances of Zaccheus were two-fold: partly circumstantial — partly personal. Partly circumstantial, arising from his riches and his profession of a publican.

Now, the publican's profession exposed him to temptation in these three ways: First of all, in the way of *opportunity*. A publican was a gatherer of the Roman public imposts. Not, however, as now, when all is fixed, and the government pays the gatherer of the taxes. The Roman publican paid so much to the government for the privilege of collecting them; and then indemnified himself, and appropriated what overplus he could, from the taxes which he gathered. There was therefore, evidently, a temptation to over-charge, and a temptation to oppress. To over-charge, because the only redress the payer of the taxes had was an appeal to law, in which his chance was small before a tribunal where the judge was a Roman, and the accuser an official of the Roman government. A temptation to oppress, because the threat of law was nearly certain to extort a bribe. Besides this, most of us must have remarked that a certain harshness of manner is contracted by those

who have the rule over the poor. They come in contact with human souls only in the way of business. They have to do with their ignorance, their stupidity, their attempts to deceive; and hence the tenderest-hearted men become impatient, and apparently unfeeling. Hard men, knowing that redress is difficult, become harder still, and exercise their authority with the insolence of office; so that, when to the insolence of office and the likelihood of impunity there was superadded the pecuniary advantage annexed to a tyrannical extortion, any one may understand how great the publican's temptation was.

Another temptation was presented: to live satisfied with a low morality. The standard of right and wrong is eternal in the heavens — unchangeably one and the same. But here on earth it is perpetually variable, — it is one in one age or nation, another in another. Every profession has its conventional morality, current nowhere else. That which is permitted by the peculiar standard of truth acknowledged at the bar, is falsehood among plain men; that which would be reckoned in the army purity and tenderness, would be elsewhere licentiousness and cruelty. There is a parliamentary honor quite distinct from honor between man and man. Trade has its honesty; which, rightly named, is fraud. And in all these cases the temptation is to live content with the standard of a man's own profession or society; and this is the real difference between the worldly man and the religious man. He is the worldling who lives below that standard, or no higher; he is the servant of God who lives above his age. But you will perceive that amongst publicans a very little would count much; that which would be

laxity to a Jew, and shame to a Pharisee, might be reckoned very strict morality among the publicans.

Again; Zaccheus was tempted to that hardness in evil which comes from having no character to support. But the extent to which sin hardens depends partly on the estimate taken of it by society. The falsehood of Abraham, the guilt and violence of David, were very different in their effect on character in an age when truth, and purity, and gentleness, were scarcely recognized, from what they would be now. Then, Abraham and David had not so sinned against their conscience as a man would sin now in doing the same acts; because their consciences were less enlightened. A man might be a slave-trader in the Western hemisphere, and in other respects a humane, upright, honorable man. In the last century, the holy Newton of Olney trafficked in slaves after becoming religious. A man who had dealings in this way in this country could not remain upright and honorable, even if it were conceivable that he began as such; because he would either conceal from the world his share in the traffic, and so, doing it secretly, would become a hypocrite; or else he must cover his wickedness by effrontery, doing it in defiance of public shame, and so getting seared in conscience. Because, in the one case, the sin, remaining sin, yet countenanced by society, does not degrade the man, nor injure his conscience, even to the same extent to which it would ruin the other, whose conscience must become seared by defiance of public shame. It is scarcely possible to unite together the idea of an executioner of public justice and a humble, holy man. And yet, assuredly, not from anything that there is unlawful in the office:

an executioner's trade is as lawful as a soldier's. A soldier is placed there by his country to slay his country's enemies; and a doomster is placed there to slay the transgressors of his country's laws. Wherein lies the difference, which leaves the one a man of honor, and almost necessitates the other to be taken from the rank of reprobates, or else gradually to become such? Simply the difference of public opinion — public scorn. Once there was no shame in the office of the executioner, and the Judge of Israel, with his own hands, hewed Agag to pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. Phinehas executed summary and sanguinary vengeance, and his name has been preserved in a hymn by his country's gratitude. The whole congregation became executioners in the case of blasphemy, and no abandonment was the result. But the voice of public opinion pronouncing an office or a man scandalous, either finds or else makes them what it has pronounced them. The executioner is or becomes an outcast, because reckoned such.

More vile and more degraded than even the executioner's office with us, was the office of publican among the Jews. A penitent publican could not go to the house of God without the risk of hearing muttered near him the sanctimonious thanksgiving of Pharisaism: "God, I thank thee that I am not as this publican." A publican, even though high in office, and rich besides, could not receive into his house a Teacher of religion without being saluted by the murmurs of the crowd, as in this case: "He is gone to eat with a man that is a sinner." A sinner! The proof of that? The only proof was that he *was* a publican. There are men and women in this congre-

gation who have committed sins that never have been published to the world; and therefore, though they be still untouched by the love of God, they have never sunk down to degradation; whereas the very same sins, branded with public shame, have sunk others not worse than them down to the lowest infamy. There is no principle in education and in life more sure than this, — to stigmatize is to ruin; to take away character is to take away all. There is no power committed to man, capable of use and abuse, more certain and more awful than this: "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."

This, then, was a temptation arising out of Zaccheus' circumstances — to become quite hardened by having no character to support.

The *personal* hindrance to a religious life lay in the recollection of past guilt. Zaccheus had done wrong, and no four-fold restitution will undo that where remorse only exists.

There is a difference between remorse and penitence. Remorse is the consciousness of wrong-doing, with no sense of love. Penitence is that same consciousness, with the feeling of tenderness and gratefulness added.

And, pernicious as have been the consequences of self-righteousness, more destructive still have been the consequences of remorse. If self-righteousness has slain its thousands, remorse has slain its tens of thousands; for, indisputably, self-righteousness secures a man from degradation. Have you never wondered at the sure walk of those persons who, to trust their own estimate of themselves, are always right? They never sin; their children are better brought up than

any other children; their conduct is irreproachable. Pride saves them from a fall. That element of self-respect, healthful always, is their safeguard. Yes, the Pharisee was right. He is not an extortioner, nor unjust, and he is regular in his payments and his duties. That was self-righteousness: it kept him from saintliness, but it saved him from degradation too. Remorse, on the contrary, crushes. If a man lose the world's respect, he can retreat back upon the consciousness of the God within. But if a man lose his own respect, he sinks down and down, and deeper yet, until he can get it back again by feeling that he is sublimely loved, and he dares at last to respect that which God vouchsafes to care for. Remorse is like the clog of an insoluble debt. The debtor is proverbially extravagant — one more, and one more expense. What can it matter, when the great bankruptcy is near? And so, in the same way, one sin, and one more. Why not? Why should he pause, when all is hopeless? What is one added to that which is already infinite?

Past guilt becomes a hindrance, too, in another way: it makes fresh sin easier. Let any one, out of a series of transgressions, compare the character of the first and the last. The first time there was the shudder and the horror, and the violent struggle, and the feeling of impossibility. I cannot — *cannot* do that. The second time there was faint reluctance, made more faint by the recollection of the facility and the pleasantness of the first transgression; and the last time there is neither shudder nor reluctance, but the eager plunge down the precipice on the brink of which he trembled

once. All this was against Zaccheus. A publican had lost self-respect, and sin was easy.

II. Pass we on to the triumph over difficulties. In this there is man's part, and God's part.

Man's part, in Zaccheus' case, was exhibited in the discovery of expedients. The Redeemer came to Jericho, and Zaccheus desired to see that blessed Countenance, whose very looks, he was told, shed peace upon restless spirits and fevered hearts. But Zaccheus was small of stature, and a crowd surrounded him. Therefore he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree. You must not look on this as a mere act of curiosity. They who thronged the steps of Jesus were a crowd formed of different materials from the crowd which would have been found in the amphitheatre. He was there as a religious Teacher or Prophet; and they who took pains to see him at least were the men who looked for salvation in Israel. This therefore was a *religious* act.

We have heard of the "pursuit of knowledge under difficulties." The shepherd, with no apparatus besides his thread and beads, has lain on his back on the starry night, mapped the heavens, and unconsciously become a distinguished astronomer. The peasant-boy, with no tools but his rude knife, and a visit now and then to the neighboring town, has begun his scientific education by producing a watch that would mark the time. The blind man, trampling upon impossibilities, has explored the economy of the bee-hive, and, more wondrous still, lectured on the laws of light. The timid stammerer, with pebbles in his mouth, and the roar of the sea-surge in his ear, has attained correctest elocu-

tion, and swayed as one man the changeful tides of the mighty masses of the Athenian democracy. All these were *expedients*. It is thus in the life religious. No man ever trod exactly the path that others trod before him. There is no exact chart laid down for the voyage. The rocks and quicksands are shifting; he who enters upon the ocean of existence arches his sails to an untried breeze. "He is the first that ever burst into that lonely sea." Every life is a *new* life. Every day is a *new* day — like nothing that ever went before, or can ever follow after. No books, no systems, no forecast set of rules, can provide for all cases: every case is a new case. And just as in any earthly enterprise — the conduct of a campaign, the building of a bridge — unforeseen difficulties and unexpected disasters must be met by that inexhaustible fertility of invention which belongs to those who do not live to God *second-hand*. We must live to God first-hand. If we are in earnest, as Zaccheus was, we must invent peculiar means of getting over peculiar difficulties.

There are times when the truest courage is shown in retreating from a temptation. There are times when, not being on a level with other men in qualifications of temper, mind, character, we must compensate by inventions and Christian expedients. You must climb over the crowd of difficulties which stand between your soul and Christ; you must "run before," and forecast trials, and get into the sycamore solitude. Without a living life like this, you will never get a glimpse of the King in his beauty: you will never see it. You will be just on the point of seeing Him, and shut out by some unexpected hindrance.

Observe, again, an illustration of this, Zaccheus

habit of restoration. "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold." There are two ways of taking this. It may have reference to the future. It commonly is so interpreted. It is supposed that, touched by the love of Christ, Zaccheus proclaimed this as his resolve,—I hereby promise to give the half of my goods to the poor. But it is likely that this interpretation has been put upon it in order to make it square with the evangelical order of emotions,—Grace first, liberality after. The interpretation seems rather put on the passage than found there. The word is not future, but singular: Behold, Lord, *I give*. And it seems more natural to take it as a statement of the habit of Zaccheus' previous life. If so, then all is plain. This man, so maligned, had been leading a righteous life, after all, according to the Mosaic standard. On the day of defence he stands forward and vindicates himself from the aspersion. "These are my habits." And the Son of Man vindicates him before all. Yes, publican as he is, he too is a "son of Abraham."

Here, then, were *expedients* by which he overcame the hindrances of his position. The tendency to the hardness and selfishness of riches he checked by a rule of giving half away. The tendency to extortion he met by fastening on himself the recollection that when the hot moment of temptation had passed away he would be severely dealt with before the tribunal of his own conscience, and unrelentingly sentenced to restore four-fold.

God's part in this triumph over difficulties is exhibited in the address of Jesus: "Zaccheus, make haste

and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

Two things: invitation and sympathy. Invitation — "come down." Say what we will of Zaccheus seeking Jesus, the truth is, Jesus was seeking Zaccheus. For what other reason but the will of God had Jesus come to Jericho, but to seek Zaccheus and such as he? Long years Zaccheus had been living in only a dim consciousness of being a servant of God and goodness. At last the Saviour is born into the world; appears in Judea; comes to Jericho, Zaccheus' town; passes down Zaccheus' street, and by Zaccheus' house, and up to Zaccheus' person. What is all this but seeking — what the Bible calls election? Now, there is a specimen in this of the ways of God with men in this world. We do not seek God: God seeks us. There is a Spirit pervading Time and Space who seeks the souls of men. At last the seeking becomes reciprocal; the Divine Presence is felt afar, and the soul begins to turn towards it. Then, when we begin to seek God, we become conscious that God is seeking us. It is at that period that we distinguish the voice of personal invitation, — "Zaccheus!" It is then that the Eternal Presence makes its abode with us, and the hour of unutterable joy begins, when the banquet of Divine Love is spread within the soul, and the Son of God abides there as at a feast. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me."

This is Divine Grace. We are saved by grace, not will. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.' In the

matter of man's salvation God is first. He comes to us self-invited. He names us by name; He isolates us from the crowd, and sheds upon us the sense of personal recognition; He pronounces the benediction, till we feel that there is a mysterious blessing on our house, and on our meal, and on our heart. "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham."

Lastly, the Divine part was done in sympathy. By sympathy we commonly mean little more than condolence. If the tear start readily at the voice of grief, and the purse-strings open at the accents of distress, we talk of a man's having great sympathy. To weep with those who weep:—common sympathy does not mean much more.

The sympathy of Christ was something different from this. Sympathy to this extent, no doubt, Zaccheus could already command. If Zaccheus were sick, even a Pharisee would have given him medicine. If Zaccheus had been in need, a Jew would not have scrupled to bestow an alms. If Zaccheus had been bereaved, many even of that crowd that murmured when they saw him treated by Christ like a son of Abraham would have given to his sorrow the tribute of a sigh.

The sympathy of Jesus was fellow-feeling for all that is human. He did not condole with Zaccheus upon his trials; He did not talk to him "about his soul;" He did not preach to him about his sins; He did not force His way into his house to lecture him: He simply said, "I will abide at thy house;" thereby identifying himself with a publican—thereby acknowledging a publican for a brother. Zaccheus a publi

can? Zaccheus a sinner?—Yes; but Zaccheus is a man. His heart throbs at cutting words; he has a sense of human honor; he feels the burning shame of a world's disgrace. Lost?—Yes: but the Son of Man, with the blood of the human race in His veins, is a brother to the lost.

It is in this entire and perfect sympathy with all humanity that the heart of Jesus differs from every other heart that is found among the sons of men. And it is this,—O! it is this, which is the chief blessedness of having such a Saviour. If you are poor, you can only get a miserable sympathy from the rich; with the best intentions, they cannot understand you. Their sympathy is awkward. If you are in pain, it is only a factitious and constrained sympathy you get from those in health,—feelings forced, adopted kindly, but imperfect still. They sit, when the regular condolence is done, beside you, conversing on topics with each other that jar upon your ear. *They* sympathize? Miserable comforters are they all. If you are miserable, and tell out your grief, you have the shame of feeling that you were not understood; that you have bared your inner self to a rude gaze. If you are in doubt, you cannot tell your doubts to religious people; no, not even to the ministers of Christ,—for they have no place for doubts in their largest system. They ask, What right have you to doubt? They suspect your character. They shake the head, and whisper it about gravely that you read strange books,—that you are verging on infidelity. If you are depressed with guilt, to whom shall you tell out your tale of shame? The confessional, with its innumerable evils, and yet indisputably soothing power, is passed away;

but there is nothing to supply its place. You cannot speak to your brother-man, for you injure him by doing so, or else weaken yourself. You cannot tell it to society, for society judges in the gross by general rules, and cannot take into account the delicate differences of transgression. It banishes the frail penitent, and does homage to the daring, hard transgressor.

Then it is that, repulsed on all sides and lonely, we turn to Him whose mighty Heart understands and feels all. "Lord, to whom shall we go? *Thou* hast the words of eternal life." And then it is that, exactly like Zaccheus, misunderstood, suspected by the world, suspected by our own hearts,—the very voice of God apparently against us,—isolated and apart, we speak to Him from the loneliness of the sycamore-tree, heart to heart, and pulse to pulse. "Lord, thou knowest all things:"—thou knowest my secret charities, and my untold self-denials:—"*Thou* knowest that I love thee."

Remark, in conclusion, the power of this sympathy in Zaccheus' character. Salvation that day came to Zaccheus' house. What brought it? What touched him? Of course, "the Gospel." Yes; but what is the Gospel? What was his Gospel? Speculations or revelations concerning the Divine Nature?—the scheme of the atonement? or of the incarnation? or baptismal regeneration? Nay, but the Divine sympathy of the Divinest Man. The personal love of God, manifested in the face of Jesus Christ. The floodgates of his soul were opened, and the whole force that was in the man flowed forth. Whichever way you take that expression, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor:"—if it referred to the future, then, touched by unexpected sympathy, finding himself

no longer an outcast, he made that resolve in gratefulness. If to the past, then, still touched by sympathy, he who had never tried to vindicate himself before the world was softened to tell out the tale of his secret munificence. This is what I have been doing all the time they slandered me, and none but God knew it.

It required something to make a man like that talk of things which he had not suffered his own left hand to know, before a scorning world. But, anyhow, it was the manifested Fellowship of the Son of Man which brought salvation to that house.

Learn this:—When we live the Gospel so, and preach the Gospel so, sinners will be brought to God. We know not yet the Gospel power; for who trusts, as Jesus did, all to that? Who ventures, as He did, upon the power of Love, in sanguine hopefulness of the most irreclaimable? Who makes *that*, the divine humanity of Christ, "the Gospel"? More than by eloquence, more than by accurate doctrine, more than by ecclesiastical order, more than by any doctrine trusted to by the most earnest and holy men, shall we and others, sinful rebels, outcast, be won to Christ, by that central truth of all the Gospel,—the entireness of the Redeemer's sympathy; in other words, the love of Jesus.

VI.

[Preached October 28, 1849.]

THE SHADOW AND THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SABBATH.

Col. ii. 16, 17 — "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holiday, or of the new-moon, or of the sabbath-days: which are a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ"

No sophistry or criticism can explain away the obvious meaning of these words. The apostle speaks of certain institutions as Jewish — shadowy, typical; and among these we are surprised to find the Sabbath days. It has been contended that there is here no allusion to the seventh day of rest, but only to certain Jewish holidays, not of Divine institution. But, in the first place, the "holidays" have been already named in the same verse; in the next, we are convinced that no plain man, reading this verse for the first time, without a doctrine to support, would have put such an interpretation upon the word; and we may be sure that St. Paul would never have risked so certain a misconstruction of his words by the use of an ambiguous phrase. This, then, is the first thing we lay down,—a very simple postulate, one would think,—when the apostle *says* the Sabbath-days, he *means* the Sabbath-days.

Peculiar difficulties attend the discussion of the subject of the Sabbath. If we take the strict and ultra ground of Sabbath observance, basing it on the rigorous requirements of the fourth commandment, we take ground which is not true; and all untruth, whether it be an over-statement or a half-truth, recoils upon itself. If we impose on men a burden which cannot be borne, and demand a strictness which, possible in theory, is impossible in practice, men recoil; we have asked too much, and they give us nothing; the result is an open, wanton, and sarcastic desecration of the Day of Rest.

If, on the other hand, we state the truth, that the Sabbath is obsolete — a shadow which has passed — without modification or explanations, evidently there is a danger no less perilous. It is true to spiritual, false to unspiritual men; and a wide door is opened for abuse. And to recklessly loosen the hold of a nation on the sanctity of the Lord's Day would be most mischievous; to do so wilfully would be an act almost diabolical. For, if we must choose between Puritan over-precision, on the one hand, and, on the other, that laxity which, in many parts of the Continent, has marked the day from other days only by more riotous worldliness, and a more entire abandonment of the whole community to amusement, no Christian would hesitate, — no English Christian, at least, to whom that day is hallowed by all that is endearing in early associations, and who feels how much it is the very bulwark of his country's moral purity.

Here, however, as in other cases, it is the half-truth which is dangerous — the other half is the corrective:

the whole truth alone is safe. If we say the Sabbath is shadow, this is only half the truth. The apostle adds, "the body is of Christ."

There is, then, in the Sabbath, that which is shadowy, and that which is substantial; that which is transient, and that which is permanent; that which is temporal and typical, and that which is eternal. The shadow, and the body.

Hence, a very natural and simple division of our subject suggests itself:

I. The transient shadow of the Sabbath, which has passed away.

II. The permanent substance, which cannot pass.

I. The transient shadow, which has passed away.

The history of the Sabbath-day is this: — It was given by Moses to the Israelites, partly as a sign between God and them, marking them off from all other nations by its observance; partly as commemorative of their deliverance from Egypt. And the reason why the seventh day was fixed on, rather than the sixth or eighth, was, that on that day God rested from his labor. The soul of man was to form itself on the model of the Spirit of God. It is not said that God at the creation gave the Sabbath to man, but that God rested at the close of the six days of creation: whereupon he had blessed and sanctified the seventh day to the Israelites. This is stated in the fourth commandment, and also in Gen. i., which was written by the Israelites; and the history of creation naturally and appropriately introduces the reason and the sanction of their day of rest.

Nor is there in the Old Testament a single trace

of the observance of the Sabbath before the time of Moses. After the Deluge, it is not mentioned in the covenant made with Noah. The first account of it occurs after the Israelites had left Egypt; and the fourth commandment consolidates it into a law, and explains the principle and sanctions of the institution.

The observance of one day in seven, therefore, is purely Jewish. The Jewish obligation to observe it rested on the enactment given by Moses.

The spirit of its observance, too, is Jewish, and not Christian. There is a difference between the spirit of Judaism and that of Christianity. The spirit of Judaism is separation — that of Christianity is permeation. To separate the evil from the good was the aim and work of Judaism: — to sever one nation from all other nations; certain meats from other meat; certain days from other days. Sanctify, means to set apart. The very essence of the idea of Hebrew holiness lay in sanctification in the sense of separation.

On the contrary, Christianity is permeation: it permeates all evil with good; it aims at overcoming evil by good; it desires to transfuse the spirit of the day of rest into all other days, and to spread the holiness of one nation over all the world. To saturate life with God, and the world with heaven, — that is the genius of Christianity.

Accordingly, the observance of the Sabbath was entirely in the Jewish spirit. No fire was permitted to be made, on pain of death: Exod. xxxv. 3. No food was to be prepared: xvi. 5, 23. No buying nor selling: Nehem. x. 31. So rigorously was all this carried out, that a man gathering sticks was arraigned

before the congregation, and sentenced to death by Moses.

This is Jewish, typical, shadowy: — it is all to pass away. Much already has passed: even those who believe our Lord's day to be the descendant of the Sabbath admit this. The day is changed. The first day of the week has taken the place of the seventh. The computation of hours is altered. The Jews reckoned from sunset to sunset: modern Christians reckon from midnight to midnight. The spirit of its observance, too, is altered. No one contends now for Jewish strictness in its details.

Now, observe, all this implies the abrogation of a great deal more — nay, of the whole Jewish Sabbath itself. We have altered the day, the computation of the hours, the mode of observance. What remains to keep? Absolutely nothing of the literal portion, except one day in seven; and that is abrogated, if the rest be abrogated. For, by what right do we say that the order of the day, whether it be the first or the seventh, is a matter of indifference, because only formal, but that the proportion of days, one in seven, instead of one in eight or nine, is moral, and unalterable? On what intelligible principle do we produce the fourth commandment as binding upon Christians, and abrogate so important a clause of it as, "In it thou shalt do *no manner of work*"? On what self-evident ground is it shown that the Jew might not light a fire, but the Christian may; yet that if the postal arrangements of a country permit the delivery of a letter, it is an infraction of the Sabbath?

Unquestionably on no scriptural authority. Let those who demand a strict observance of the letter

of scripture remember that the Jewish Sabbath is distinctly enforced in the Bible, and nowhere in the Bible repealed. You have changed the seventh day to the first on no clear scriptural permission. Two or three passages tell us that, after the resurrection, the apostles were found together on the first day of the week (which, by the way, may have been Saturday evening after sunset). But it is concluded that therefore *probably* the change was apostolic. You have only a probability to go on — and that probability, except with the aid of tradition, infinitesimally small — for the abrogation of a single iota of the Jewish fourth commandment.

It will be said, however, that works of necessity and works of mercy are excepted by Christ's example.

Tell us, then, ye who are servants of the letter, and yet do not scruple to use a carriage to convey you to some church where a favorite minister is heard, is that a spiritual necessity, or a spiritual luxury? Part of the Sunday meal of all of you is the result of a servant's work. Tell us, then, ye accurate logicians, who say that nothing escapes the rigor of the prohibition, which is not necessary or merciful? Is a hot repast a work of necessity, or a work of mercy? O! it rouses in every true soul a deep and earnest indignation to hear men who drive their cattle to church on Sundays, because they are too emasculated to trudge through cold and rain on foot, invoke the severity of an insulted Law of the Decalogue on those who provide facilities of movement for such as cannot afford the luxury of a carriage. What, think you, would He who blighted the Pharisees with such burning words have said, had He been present by, while

men, whose servants clean their houses, and prepare their meals, and harness their horses, stand up to denounce the service on some railway by which the poor are helped to health and enjoyment? Hired service for the rich is a necessity, — hired service for the poor is a desecration of the Sabbath! It is right that a thousand should toil for the few in private! It is past bearing, in a Christian country, that a few should toil for thousands on the Sabbath-day!

There is only this alternative: If the fourth commandment be binding still, that clause is unrepealed — "no manner of work;" and so, too, is that other important part, the sanctification of the seventh day, and not the first. If the fourth commandment be not binding in these points, then there is nothing left but the broad, comprehensive ground taken by the apostle. The whole Sabbath is a shadow of things to come. In consistency, either hold that none of the formal part is abrogated, or else all. The whole of the letter of the commandment is moral, or else none.

II. There is, however, in the Sabbath a substance, a permanent something — "a body" — which cannot pass away.

"The body is of Christ;" the spirit of Christ is the fulfilment of the law. To have the spirit of Christ is to have fulfilled the law. Let us hear the mind of Christ in this matter.

"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." In that principle, rightly understood, lies the clue for the unravelling of the whole matter. The religionists of that day maintained that the necessities of man's nature must give way to the rigor of the

enactment; He taught that the enactment must yield to man's necessities. They said that the Sabbath was written in the book of the Law; He said that it was written on man's nature, and that the law was merely meant to be in accordance with that nature. They based the obligation to observe the Sabbath on the sacredness of an enactment; He, on the sacredness of the nature of man.

An illustration will help us to perceive the difference between these two views. A wise physician prescribes a regimen of diet to a palate which has become diseased; he fixes what shall be eaten, the quantity, the hours, and the number of times. On what does the obligation to obey rest? On the arbitrary authority of the physician, or on the nature with which that prescription is in accordance? When soundness and health are restored, the prescription falls into disuse; but the nature remains unalterable, which has made some things nutritious, others unwholesome, and excess forever pernicious. Thus the spirit of the prescription may be still in force when the prescriptive authority is repealed.

So, Moses prescribed the Sabbath to a nation spiritually diseased. He gave the regimen of rest to men who did not feel the need of spiritual rest. He fenced round his rule with precise regulations of detail — one day in seven, no work, no fire, no traffic. On what does the obligation to obey it rest? On the authority of the rule, or on the necessities of that nature for which the rule was divinely adapted? Was man made for the Sabbath, to obey it as a slave? or, was the Sabbath made for man? And when spiritual health has been restored, the Law regulating the details of

rest may become obsolete, but the nature which demands rest never can be reversed.

Observe, now, that this is a far grander, safer, and more permanent basis, on which to rest the Sabbath, than the mere enactment. For, if you allege the fourth commandment as your authority, straightway you are met by the objection, "no *manner* of work." Who gave you leave to alter that? And if you reply, Works of necessity and works of mercy I may do, for Christ excepted these from the stringency of the rule; again the rejoinder comes, Is there one in ten of the things that all Christians permit as lawful really a matter of necessity?

Whereas, if the Sabbath rest on the needs of human nature, and we accept His decision that the Sabbath was made for *man*, then you have an eternal ground to rest on, from which you cannot be shaken. A son of man may be lord of the Sabbath-day, but he is not lord of his own nature. He cannot make one hair white or black. You may abrogate the formal rule, but you cannot abrogate the needs of your own soul. Eternal as the constitution of the soul of man is the necessity for the existence of a day of rest. Further, still, on this ground alone can you find an impregnable defence of the *proportion*, one day in seven. On the other ground it is unsafe. Having altered the seventh to the first, I know not why one in seven might not be altered to one in ten. The thing, however, has been tried; and, by the necessities of human nature, the change has been found pernicious. One day in ten, prescribed by revolutionary France, was actually pronounced by physiologists insufficient. So that we begin to find that, in a deeper sense than we at first

suspected, "the Sabbath was made for man." Even in the contrivance of one day in seven, it was arranged by unerring wisdom. Just because the Sabbath was made for man, and not because man was ordained to keep the Sabbath-day, you cannot tamper even with the iota, one day in seven.

That necessity on which the observance leans is the need of Rest. It is the deepest want in the soul of man. If you take off covering after covering of the nature which wraps him round, till you come to the central heart of hearts, deep lodged there you find the requirement of Repose. All men do not hanker after pleasure, — all men do not crave intellectual food. But all men long for rest: the most restless that ever pursued a turbulent career on earth did, by that career, only testify to the need of the soul within. They craved for something which was not given; there was a thirst which was not slaked; their very restlessness betokened that — restless because not at rest. It is this need which sometimes makes the quiet of the grave an object of such deep desire. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest." It is this which creates the chief desirableness of Heaven: "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." And it is this which, consciously or unconsciously, is the real wish that lies at the bottom of all others. O! for tranquillity of heart — Heaven's profound silence in the soul, "a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God, is of great price!"

The rest needed by man is two-fold. Physical repose of the body, — a need which he shares with the animals, through the lower nature which he has in common with them. "Thou shalt do no work, nor thy cattle,"

—so far man's Sabbath-need places him only on a level with the ox and with the ass.

But, besides this, the rest demanded is a repose of spirit. Between these two kinds of rest there is a very important difference. Bodily repose is simply inaction: the rest of the soul is exercise, not torpor. To do nothing is physical rest: to be engaged in full activity is the rest of the soul.

In that hour which of all the twenty-four is most emblematic of heaven, and suggestive of repose, the eventide, in which instinctively Jacob went into the fields to meditate,—when the work of the day is done, when the mind has ceased its tension, when the passions are lulled to rest, in spite of themselves, by the spell of the quiet, star-lit sky,—it is then, amidst the silence of the lull of all the lower parts of our nature, that the soul comes forth to do its work. Then the peculiar, strange work of the soul, which the intellect cannot do—meditation—begins. Awe, and worship, and wonder, are in full exercise; and Love begins then in its purest form of mystic adoration, and pervasive and undefined tenderness—separate from all that is coarse and earthly—swelling as if it would embrace the All in its desire to bless, and lose itself in the sea of the Love of God. This is the Rest of the soul—the *exercise* and play of all the nobler powers.

Two things are suggested by this thought.

First, the mode of the observance of the day of Rest. It has become lately a subject of very considerable attention. Physiologists have demonstrated the necessity of cessation from toil: they have urged the impossibility of perpetual occupation without end. Pictures, with much pathos in them, have been placed before us

describing the hard fate of those on whom no Sabbath dawns. It has been demanded as a right, entreated as a mercy, on behalf of the láboring man, that he should have one day in seven for recreation of his bodily energies. All well and true. But there is a great deal more than this. He who confines his conception of the need of rest to that, has left man on a level with the brutes. Let a man take merely lax and liberal notions of the fourth commandment,—let him give his household dependants immunity from toil, and wish for himself and them no more,—he will find that there is a something wanting still. Experience tells us, after a trial, that those Sundays are the happiest, the purest, the most rich in blessing, in which the spiritual part has been most attended to; those in which the business letter was put aside till evening, and the profane literature not opened, and the ordinary occupations entirely suspended; those in which, as in the temple of Solomon, the sound of the earthly hammer has not been heard in the temple of the soul: for this is, in fact, the very distinction between the spirit of the Jewish Sabbath and the spirit of the Christian Lord's day. The one is chiefly for the body—"Thou shalt do no manner of work." The other is principally for the soul—"I was in the spirit on the Lord's day."

The other truth suggested by that fact,—that the repose of the soul is exercise, not rest,—is, that it conveys an intimation of man's immortality. It is only when all the rest of our human nature is calmed that the spirit comes forth into full energy; all the rest tires,—the spirit never tires. Humbleness, awe, adoration, love, these have in them no weariness; so that when this frame shall be dissolved into the dust of the earth,

and the mind, which is merely fitted for this time-world, learning by experience, shall have been superseded, then, in the opening out of an endless career of love, the spirit will enter upon that Sabbath of which all earthly Sabbaths are but the shadow, — the Sabbath of Eternity, the immortal Rest of its Father's Home.

Two observations in concluding.

1. When is a son of man lord of the Sabbath-day? To whom may the Sabbath safely become a shadow? I reply, he that has the mind of Christ may exercise discretionary lordship over the Sabbath-day. He who is in possession of the substance may let the shadow go. A man in health has done with the prescriptions of the physician. But for an unspiritual man to regulate his hours and amount of rest by his desires, is just as preposterous as for an unhealthy man to rule his appetites by his sensations. Win the mind of Christ—be like him—and then, in the reality of Rest in God, the Sabbath form of rest will be superseded. Remain apart from Christ, and then you are under the law again,—the fourth commandment is as necessary for you as it was for the Israelite; the prescriptive regimen, which may discipline your soul to a sounder state. It is at his peril that the worldly man departs from the *rule* of the day of rest. Nothing can make us free from the law but the spirit.

2. The rule pronounced by the apostle is a rule of liberty, and at the same time a rule of charity: "Let no man judge you in respect of the Sabbath-days." It is very difficult to discuss this question of the Sabbath. Heat, vehemence, acrimony, are substituted for argument. When you calmly ask to investigate the subject, men apply epithets, and call them reasons: —

they stigmatize you as a breaker of the Sabbath, pronounce you "dangerous;" with sundry warnings against you in private, and pregnant hints in public.

The apostle urges charity: "One man esteemeth one day above another; another man esteemeth every day alike." . . . . "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he regardeth it not." Carry out that spirit. In the detail of this question there is abundant difficulty. It is a question of degree. Some work must be done on the Sabbath-day; some must sacrifice their rest to the rest of others; for all human life is sacrifice, voluntary or involuntary. Again, that which is rest to one man is not rest to another. To require the illiterate man to read his Bible for some hours, would impose a toil to him, though it might be a relaxation to you. To the laboring man a larger proportion of the day must be given to the recreation of his physical nature than is necessary for the man of leisure, to whom the spiritual observance of the day is easy, and seems all. Let us learn large, charitable considerateness. Let not the poor man sneer at his richer neighbor, if, in the exercise of his Christian liberty, he uses his horses to convey him to church, and not to the mere drive of pleasure; but then, in fairness, let not the rich man be shocked and scandalized if the over-wearied shopkeeper and artizan breathe the fresh air of heaven with their families in the country. "The Sabbath was made for man." Be generous, consistent, large-minded. A man may hold stiff, precise, Jewish notions on this subject; but do not stigmatize that man as a formalist. Another may hold large, Paul-like views of the abrogation of the fourth commandment, and yet he may be

sincerely and zealously anxious for the hallowing of the day in his household and through his country. Do not call that man a Sabbath-breaker. Remember, the Pharisees called the Son of God a Sabbath-breaker. They kept the law of the Sabbath; they broke the law of love. Which was the worse to break? which was the higher law to keep? Take care, lest, in the zeal which seems to you to be for Christ, ye be found indulging their spirit, and not His.

VII.

(Preached November 4, 1849.)

THE SYMPATHY OF CHRIST.

Heb. iv. 15, 16. — "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

ACCORDING to these verses, the Priesthood of Jesus Christ is based upon the perfection of His humanity. Because tempted in all points like as we are, therefore He can show mercy, and grant help. Whatever destroys the conception of His humanity, does in that same degree overthrow the notion of His priesthood.

Our subject is the Priestly Sympathies of Christ. But we make three preliminary observations.

The perfection of Christ's humanity implies that He was possessed of a human soul as well as a human body. There was a view, held in early times, and condemned by the Church as a heresy, according to which the body of Christ was an external frame-work animated by Deity, as our bodies are animated by our souls. What the soul is to us, Deity was to Christ. His body was flesh, blood, bones — moved, guided, ruled, by indwelling Divinity.

But you perceive at once that this destroys the notion of complete humanity. It is not this tabernacle of material elements which constitutes our humanity; you cannot take the pale corpse from which life has fled and call that man. And if Deity were to take up that form and make it its abode, that would not be an union of the Divine and human. It would only be the union of Deity with certain materials that might have passed into man, or into an animal, or an herb. Humanity implies a body and a soul.

Accordingly, in the life of Christ we find two distinct classes of feeling. When He hungered in the wilderness, when He thirsted on the cross, when He was weary by the well at Sychar, He experienced sensations which belong to the bodily department of human nature. But when out of twelve He selected one to be His bosom friend, when He looked round upon the crowd in anger, when the tears streamed down his cheeks at Bethany, and when He recoiled from the thought of approaching dissolution, these — grief, friendship, fear — were not sensations of the body, much less were they the attributes of Godhead. They were the affections of an acutely sensitive human soul, alive to all the tenderness, and hopes, and anguish, with which human life is filled, qualifying Him to be tempted *in all* points like as we are.

The second thought which presents itself is, that the Redeemer not only was, but is man. He *was* tempted in all points like us. He *is* a high priest which can be touched. Our conceptions on this subject, from being vague, are often very erroneous. It

is fancied that, in the history of Jesus' existence, once, for a limited period and for definite purposes, he took part in frail humanity; but that when that purpose was accomplished, the man forever perished, and the Spirit reascended, to unite again with pure, unmixed Deity. But scripture has taken peculiar pains to give assurance of the continuance of His Humanity. It has carefully recorded His resurrection. After that He passed through space, from spot to spot: when He was in one place, He was not in another. His body was sustained by the ordinary aliments — broiled fish and honeycomb. The prints of suffering were on Him. His recognitions were human still. Thomas and Peter were specially reminded of incidents before His death, and connected with His living interests. To Thomas, — "Reach hither thy hand." To Peter, — "Lovest thou me?"

And this typifies to us a very grand and important truth. It is this, if I may venture to so express myself, — the truth of the Human Heart of God. We think of God as a Spirit, infinitely removed from and unlike the creatures He has made. But the truth is, man resembles God: — all spirits, all minds, are of the same family. The Father bears a likeness to the Son whom He has created. The Mind of God is similar to the mind of man. Love does not mean one thing in man, and another thing in God. Holiness, Justice, Pity, Tenderness, — these are in the Eternal the same in kind which they are in the Finite Being. The present manhood of Christ conveys this deeply important truth, that the Divine Heart is human in its sympathies.

The third observation upon these verses is, that

there is a connection between what Jesus was and what Jesus is. He can be touched now, *because* He was tempted then. The incidents and the feelings of that part of the existence which is gone have not past away without results which are deeply entwined with His present being. His past experience has left certain effects durable in His nature as it is now. It has endued Him with certain qualifications and certain susceptibilities, which He would not have had but for that experience. Just as the results remained upon His body, the prints of the nails in His palms, and the spear-gash in His side, so do the results remain upon His soul: enduing Him with a certain susceptibility, for He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; with certain qualifications, for He is able to show mercy, and to impart grace to help in time of need.

To turn now to the subject itself. It has two branches.

I. The Redeemer's preparation for His priesthood.

II. The Redeemer's priestly qualifications.

I. His preparation.

The preparation consisted in being tempted. But here a difficulty arises. Temptation, as applied to a Being perfectly free from tendencies to evil, is not easy to understand. See what the difficulty is. Temptation has two senses: it means test or probation; it means also trial, involving the idea of pain or danger. A common acid applied to gold tests it; but there is no risk or danger to the most delicate golden ornament. There is one acid, and only one, which tries it, as well as tests it. The same acid applied to a shell endangers the delicacy of its surface. A weight hung

from a bar of iron only tests its strength; the same depending from a human arm is a trial involving, it may be, the risk of pain or fracture. Now, trial placed before a sinless being is intelligible enough in the sense of probation: it is a test of excellence; but it is not easy to see how it can be temptation in the sense of pain, if there be no inclination to do wrong.

However, scripture plainly asserts this as the character of Christ's temptation. Not merely test, but trial.

First, you have passages declaring the immaculate nature of His mind; as here, "without sin." Again, He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." And, again, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." The spirit of evil found nothing which it could claim as its own in Christ. It was the meeting of two elements which will not amalgamate. Oil and water could as easily blend as the Mind of Christ with evil. Temptation glanced from His heart as the steel point does from the surface of the diamond. It was not that evil propensities were kept under by the power of the spirit in him. He had no evil propensities at all. Obedience was natural to Him.

But then we find another class of passages, such as this: "He *suffered*, being tempted." There was not merely test in the temptation, but there was also painfulness in the victory. How could this be, without any tendency to evil?

To answer this, let us analyze sin. In every act of sin there are two distinct steps. There is the rising of a desire which is natural, and, being natural, is not wrong: — there is the indulgence of that desire in

forbidden circumstances; and that is sin. Let injury for example, be inflicted, and resentment will arise. It must arise spontaneously. It is as impossible for injustice to be done, and resentment not to follow, as it is for the flesh not to quiver on the application of intense torture. Resentment is but the sense of injustice, made more vivid by its being brought home to ourselves: — resentment is beyond our control, so far There is no sin in this; but let resentment rest there: let it pass into, not justice, but revenge, — let it smoulder in vindictive feeling till it becomes retaliation, — and then a natural feeling has grown into a transgression. You have the distinction between these two things clearly marked in scripture. "Be ye angry," — here is the allowance for the human; "and sin not," — here is the point where resentment passes into retaliation.

Take, again, the natural sensation of hunger. Let a man have been without food; let the gratification present itself, and the natural desire will arise involuntarily. It will arise just as certainly in a forbidden as in a permitted circumstance. It will arise whether what he looks on be the bread of another or his own. And it is not here, in the sensation of hunger, that the guilt lies; but it lies in the wilful gratification of it after it is known to be forbidden.

This was literally one of the cases in which Christ was tried. The wish for food was in His nature in the wilderness. The very mode of gratifying it was presented to His imagination, — by using Divine power in an unlawful way. And had He so been constituted that the lower wish was superior to the higher will, there would have been an act of sin; had the two

been nearly balanced, so that the conflict hung in doubt, there would have been a tendency to sin — what we call a sinful nature. But it was in the entire and perfect subjugation of desire to the will of Right that a sinless nature was exhibited.

Here, then, is the nature of sin. Sin is not the possession of desires, but the having them in uncontrolled ascendency over the higher nature. Sinfulness does not consist in having *strong* desires or passions. In the strongest and highest natures, all, including the desires, is strong. Sin is not a real *thing*. It is rather the absence of a something, the will to do right. It is not a disease or taint, an actual substance projected into the constitution. It is the absence of the spirit which orders and harmonizes the whole; so that what we mean when we say the natural man must sin inevitably is this, — that he has strong natural appetites, and that he has no bias from above to counteract those appetites: exactly as if a ship were deserted by her crew, and left on the bosom of the Atlantic with every sail set and the wind blowing. No one forces her to destruction; yet on the rocks she will surely go, just because there is no pilot at the helm. Such is the state of ordinary men. Temptation leads to fall. The gusts of instinct, which rightly guided would have carried safely into port, dash them on the rocks. No one forces them to sin; but the spirit-pilot has left the helm. Fallen Nature!

Sin, therefore, is not in the appetites, but in the absence of a controlling Will.

Now, contrast this state with the state of Christ. There were in Him all the natural appetites of mind and body. Relaxation and friendship were dear to

Him; so were sunlight and life. Hunger — pain — death — He could feel all, and shrunk from them. Conceive, then, a case in which the gratification of any one of these inclinations was inconsistent with His Father's will. At one moment it was unlawful to eat, though hungry; and, without one tendency to disobey did fasting cease to be severe? It was demanded that He should endure anguish; and, willingly as he subdued Himself, did pain cease to be pain? Could the spirit of obedience reverse every feeling of human nature? When the brave man gives his shattered arm to the surgeon's knife, will may prevent even the quiver of an eyelid; but no will, and no courage, can reverse his sensations, or prevent the operation from inflicting pain. When the heart is raw, and smarting from recent bereavement, let there be the deepest and most reverential submission to the Highest Will, is it possible not to wince? Can any cant demand for submission extort the confession that pain is pleasure?

It seems to have been in this way that the temptation of Christ caused suffering. He suffered from the force of desire. Though there was no hesitation whether to obey or not, no strife in the will, in the act of mastery there was pain. There was self-denial; there was obedience at the expense of tortured natural feeling. He shrunk from St. Peter's suggestion of escape from ignominy as from a thing which did not shake His determination, but made Him feel, in the idea of bright life, vividly the cost of His resolve. "Get thee behind me, Tempter, for thou art an offence." In the garden, unswervingly: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." No reluctance in the *will*. But was there no struggling? No shudder in the

inward sensations? No remembrance that the Cross was sharp? No recollection of the family at Bethany, and the pleasant walk, and the dear companionship which He was about to leave?—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful to die." . . . .

So that in every one of these cases—not by the reluctancy of a sinful sensation, but by the quivering and the anguish of natural feeling when it is trampled upon by lofty will—Jesus *suffered*, being tempted. He was "tempted like as we are." Remember this. For the way in which some speak of the sinlessness of Jesus reduces all His suffering to physical pain—destroys the reality of temptation, reduces that glorious heart to a pretence, and converts the whole of His history into a mere fictitious drama, in which scenes of trial were represented, not felt.

Remember that, "in all points," the Redeemer's *soul* was tempted.

II. The second point we take is the Redeemer's Priesthood.

Priesthood is that office by which He is the medium of union between man and God. The capacity for this has been indelibly engraven on His nature by His experience here. All this capacity is based on His sympathy: He can be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

Till we have reflected on it, we are scarcely aware how much the sum of human happiness in the world is indebted to this one feeling—sympathy. We get cheerfulness and vigor, we scarcely know how or when, from mere association with our fellow-men; and from the looks reflected on us of gladness and employ

ment we catch inspiration and power to go on, from human presence and from cheerful looks. The workman works with added energy from having others by. The full family circle has a strength and a life peculiarly its own. The substantial good and the effectual relief which men extend to one another is trifling. It is not by these, but by something far less costly, that the work is done. God has insured it by a much more simple machinery. He has given to the weakest and the poorest power to contribute largely to the common stock of gladness. The child's smile and laugh are mighty powers in this world. When bereavement has left you desolate, what substantial benefit is there which makes condolence acceptable? It cannot replace the loved ones you have lost. It can bestow upon you nothing permanent. But a warm hand has touched yours, and its thrill told you that there was a living response there to your emotion. One look, one human sigh, has done more for you than the costliest present could convey.

And it is for want of remarking this that the effect of public charity falls often so far short of the expectations of those who give. The springs of men's generosity are dried up by hearing of the repining, and the envy, and the discontent, which have been sown by the general collection and the provision establishment, among cottages where all was harmony before. The famine and the pestilence are met by abundant liberality; and the apparent return for this is riot and sedition. But the secret lies all in this. It is not in channels such as these that the heart's gratitude can flow. Love is not bought by money, but by love. There has been all the machinery of a

public distribution; but there has been no exhibition of individual, personal interest. The rich man who goes to his poor brother's cottage, and, without affectation of humility, naturally, and with the respect which man owes to man, enters into his circumstances, inquiring about his distresses, and hears his homely tale, has done more to establish an interchange of kindly feeling than he could have secured by the costliest present, by itself. Public donations have their value and their uses. Poor-laws keep human beings from starvation; but in the point of eliciting gratitude all these fail. Man has not been brought into contact close enough with man for this. They do not work by sympathy.

Again, when the electric touch of sympathetic feeling has gone among a mass of men, it communicates itself, and is reflected back from every individual in the crowd, with a force exactly proportioned to their numbers. The speech or sermon read before the limited circle of a family, and the same discourse uttered before closely-crowded hundreds, are two different things. There is a strange power even in the mere presence of a common crowd, exciting almost uncontrollable emotion.

It is on record that the hard heart of an oriental conqueror was unmanned by the sight of a dense mass of living millions engaged in one enterprise. He accounted for it by saying that it suggested to him that within a single century not one of those millions would be alive. But the hard-hearted bosom of the tyrant mistook its own emotions. His tears came from no such far-fetched inference of reflection; they rose spontaneously, as they will rise in a dense crowd, you

cannot tell why. It is the thrilling thought of numbers engaged in the same object. It is the idea of our own feelings reciprocated back to us, and reflected from many hearts. It is the mighty presence of life.

And, again, it seems partly to avail itself of this tendency within us that such stress is laid on the injunction of united prayer. Private devotion is essential to the spiritual life; without it there is no life. But it cannot replace united prayer; for the two things have different aims. Solitary prayer is feeble in comparison with that which rises before the throne echoed by the hearts of hundreds, and strengthened by the feeling that other aspirations are mingling with our own. And whether it be the chanted litany, or the more simply read service, or the anthem, producing one emotion at the same moment in many bosoms; the value and the power of public prayer seem chiefly to depend on this mysterious affection of our nature — sympathy.

And now, having endeavored to illustrate this power of sympathy, it is for us to remember that of this in its fulness He is susceptible. There is a vague way of speaking of the atonement which does not realize the tender, affectionate, personal love, by which that daily, hourly reconciliation is effected. The sympathy of Christ was not merely love of men in masses. He loved the masses, but He loved them because made up of individuals. He "had compassion on the multitude;" but He had also discriminating, special tenderness for erring Peter and erring Thomas. He felt for the despised, lonely Zaccheus in his sycamore-tree. He compassioned the discomfort of his disciples. He mixed His tears with the stifled sobs by the grave of

Lazarus. He called the abashed children to His side. Amongst the numbers, as He walked, He detected the individual touch of faith. "Master, the multitude throng thee, and sayest thou, *Who* touched me?" "Somebody hath touched me."

Observe how He is *touched* by our infirmities,—with a separate, special, discriminating love. There is not a single throb, in a single human bosom, that does not thrill at once with more than electric speed up to the mighty Heart of God. *You* have not shed a tear, or sighed a sigh, that did not come back to you exalted and purified by having passed through the Eternal bosom.

The priestly powers conveyed by this faculty of sympathizing, according to the text, are two:—The power of mercy; and the power of having grace to help. "Therefore"—because he can be touched—"let us come boldly," expecting mercy—and grace.

1. We may boldly expect mercy from Him who has learned to sympathize. He learned sympathy by being tempted; but it is by being tempted, *yet without sin*, that he is specially able to show mercy.

There are two who are unfit for showing mercy:—he who has never been tried; and he who, having been tempted, has fallen under temptation. The young, untempted, and upright, are often severe judges. They are for sanguinary punishment; they are for expelling offenders from the bosom of society. The old, on the contrary, who have fallen much, are lenient; but it is a leniency which often talks thus: Men must be men; a young man must sow his wild oats, and reform.

So young, ardent Saul, untried by doubt, persecuted

the Christians with severity; and Saul the king, on the contrary, having fallen himself, weakly permitted Agag to escape punishment. David, again, when his own sin was narrated to him under another name, was unrelenting in his indignation: "The man that hath done this thing shall surely die."

None of these were qualified for showing mercy aright. Now, this qualification "without sin" is very remarkable, for it is the one we often least should think of. Unthinkingly we should say that to have erred would make a man lenient. It is not so.

That truth is taught with deep significance in one of the incidents of the Redeemer's life. There stood in His presence a tempted woman, covered with the confusion of recent conviction. And there stood beside her the sanctimonious religionists of that day, waiting like hell-hounds to be let loose upon their prey. Calm words came from the lips of Him "who spake as man never spake," and whose heart felt as man never felt. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone." A memorable lesson of eternal truth. Sinners are not fit to judge of sin:—their justice is revenge; their mercy is feebleness. He alone can judge of sin, he alone can attemper the sense of what is due to the offended Law with the remembrance of that which is due to human frailty, he alone is fit for showing manly mercy, who has, like his Master, felt the power of temptation in its might, and come scathless through the trial.

"In all points tempted,—*yet without sin;*" therefore, to Him you may "boldly go to find mercy."

2. The other priestly power is the grace of showing "help in time of need."

We must not make too much of sympathy, as mere feeling. We do in things spiritual as we do with hot-house plants. The feeble exotic, beautiful to look at, but useless, has costly sums spent on it. The hardy oak, a nation's strength, is permitted to grow, scarcely observed, in the fence and copses. We prize feeling, and praise its possessor. But feeling is only a sickly exotic in itself,—a passive quality, having in it nothing moral—no temptation, and no victory. A man is no more a good man for having feeling, than he is for having a delicate ear for music, or a far-seeing optic nerve. The Son of Man had feeling; He could be "touched." The tear would start from His eyes at the sight of human sorrow. But that sympathy was no exotic in His soul, beautiful to look at, too delicate for use. Feeling with Him led to this: "He went about doing good." Sympathy with Him was this: "Grace to help in time of need."

And this is the blessing of the thought of Divine sympathy. By the sympathy of man, after all, the wound is not healed; it is only stanched for a time. It can make the tear flow less bitterly: it cannot dry it up. So far as permanent good goes, who has not felt the deep truth which Job taught his friends,—"Miserable comforters are ye all!"

The sympathy of the Divine Human! He knows what strength is needed. He gives grace to help; and when the world, with its thousand forms of temptation, seems to whisper to us as to Esau, Sell me thy birthright; the other voice speaks, Shall I barter blessedness for happiness? the inward peace for the outward thrill? the benediction of my Father for a mess of pottage? There are moments when we seem to tread above this

earth, superior to its allurements, able to do with its kindness, firmly bracing ourselves to do our w as He did His. Those moments are not the suns of life. They did not come when the world w have said that all round you was glad; but it when outward trials had shaken the soul to its centre, then there came from Him . . . "Grac help in time of need."

From this subject I draw, in concluding, two i ences.

1. He who would sympathize must be content t tried and tempted. There is a hard and boiste rudeness in our hearts by nature, which require be softened down. We pass by suffering gayly, lessly; not in cruelty, but unfeelingly, just bec we do not know what suffering is. We wound by our looks and our abrupt expressions wit intending it, because we have not been taught delicacy, and the tact, and the gentleness, which only be learnt by the wounding of our own sens ties. There is a haughty feeling in uprightness w has never been on the verge of fall, that req humbling. There is an inability to enter into dif ties of thought, which marks the mind to whic things have been presented superficially, and w has never experienced the horror of feeling the ic doubt crashing beneath the feet.

Therefore, if you aspire to be a son of consolat if you would partake of the priestly gift of sy thy; if you would pour something beyond com place consolation into a tempted heart; if you w pass through the intercourse of daily life with delicate tact which never inflicts pain; if to that

acute of human ailments, mental doubt, you are ever to give effectual succor,—you must be content to pay the price of the costly education. Like Him, you must suffer — being tempted.

But remember, it is being tempted in all points, *yet without sin*, that makes sympathy real, manly, perfect, instead of a mere sentimental tenderness. Sin will teach you to *feel* for trials. It will not enable you to judge them; to be merciful to them; nor to help them in time of need with any certainty.

(See the remarks on St. Peter's case in the notes of the afternoon Sermon.)

Lastly, it is this same human sympathy which qualifies Christ for judgment. It is written that the Father hath committed all judgment to Him, *because* He is the Son of Man. The sympathy of Christ extends to the frailties of human nature; not to its hardened guilt. He is "touched with the feeling of our *infirmities*." There is nothing in His bosom which can harmonize with malice; He cannot feel for envy; He has no fellow-feeling for cruelty, oppression, hypocrisy, bitter censorious judgments. Remember, He could look round about Him with anger. The sympathy of Christ is a comforting subject. It is, besides, a tremendous subject: for on sympathy the awards of heaven and hell are built. "Except a man be born again" — not he *shall* not, but — "he *cannot* enter into heaven." There is nothing in him which has affinity to anything in the Judge's bosom. A sympathy for that which is pure implies a repulsion of that which is impure. Hatred of evil is in proportion to the strength of love for good. To love intensely good, is to hate intensely evil. It was in strict accordance

with the laws of sympathy that he blighted Pharis in such ungentle words as these: "Ye serpent generation of vipers! how can ye escape the da tion of hell?" Win the mind of Christ now else His sympathy for human nature will not save from, but only insure, the recoil of abhorrence at last — "Depart from me! I never knew you."

VIII.

[Preached November 11, 1849.]

THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AT JOHN'S BAPTISM.

MATT. iii. 7. — "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

It seems that the Baptist's ministry had been attended with almost incredible success, as if the population of the country had been roused in mass by the tidings of his doctrine. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized by him in Jordan, confessing their sins."

The success of his ministry was tested by the numbers that he baptized. Not so a modern ministry. Ministerial success is not shown now by the numbers who listen. Not impression, but altered character, marks success. Not by startling nor by electrifying congregations, but by turning men from darkness unto light, from the power of Satan unto God, is the work done. With John, however, it was different. He was on earth to do a special work — the work of the axe, not the trowel; to throw down, not to build; to startle, not to instruct; and therefore his baptism was

simply symbolized by water, the washing away of the past: whereas that of Christ was symbolized by fire, the touching of the life and heart with the living flame of a heavenlier life. Whoever, therefore, came to John for baptism, possessed conviction of the truth of that which John taught, and thereby so far tested the fidelity and success of his ministry.

Bearing, then, in mind, that coming to John's baptism was the seal of his success, and that his baptism contained, in symbolical form, the whole substance of his teaching, these are the two topics of the text:

I. The meaning wrapped up in John's message.

II. The Baptist's astonishment at his own success.

I. The meaning of John's message. His baptism implied to those who came to put themselves under its protection that they were in danger, for it was connected with the warning, "Flee from the wrath to come!"

Future retribution has become to us a kind of figment. Hell is in the world of shadows. The tone in which educated men speak of it still is often only that good-humored condescension which makes allowance for childish superstition.

Part of this incredulity arises from the confessedly symbolical intimations of scripture on the subject. We read of the fire and the worm; of spirits being salted with fire; of a lake of fire and brimstone. All this tells solely of physical suffering. And, accordingly, for centuries, this was the predominant conception of Christendom on the subject. Scarcely any other element was admitted. Whoever has seen those paintings on which the master-spirits have thrown down the

conceptions of their age, will remember that hideous demons, distorted countenances, and waves of flame, represent the whole idea. And in that immortal work in which he who sung of hell, purgatory, and heaven, has embodied the belief of his day, still the same fact prevails. You read of the victims of unchaste life borne on the dark whirlwind forever; of the heretics in their coffins of intense fire; and of the guilty spirits who are plunged deep down in "thick-ribbed ice." But in those harrowing pictures which his genius has painted with such vividness there is not one idea of mental suffering embodied. It is all bodily, awful, intolerable torture. Now, all this we believe no longer. The circles of hell and the mountain of purgatory are as fabulous to us as the Tartarus of the heathens. Singular, that in an age in which the chief aim of science appears to be to get rid of physical pain and discomfort — as if these were the worst evils conceivable — the idea of a bodily hell should be just the one at which we have learnt to smile. But, with the form, we have also dispossessed ourselves of belief in the reality of retribution at all.

Now, scripture language is symbolical. There is no salt, no worm, no fire, to torture. I say not that a diseased soul may not form for itself a tenement hereafter, as here, peculiarly fitted to be the avenue of suffering; but, unquestionably, we cannot build upon these expressions a material hell.

Hell is the infinite terror of the soul, whatever that may be. To one man it is pain. Rid him of that, he can bear all degradation. To another it is public shame. Save him from that, and he will creep and crawl before you to submit to any reptile meanness. 'Honor me

now, I pray thee, before the people," till Samuel tu
from the abject thing in scorn. To others, the infi
terror is *that* compared with which all these would
a bed of roses. It is the hell of having done wro
the hell of having had a spirit from God pure, v
high aspirations, and to be conscious of having du
its delicacy, and degraded its desires; the hell of l
ing quenched a light brighter than the sun's; of hav
done to another an injury that through time and thro
eternity never can be undone, — infinite, madden
remorse, — the hell of knowing that every chance
excellence, and every opportunity of good, has b
lost forever. This is the infinite terror; this is w
to come.

You doubt that? Have you ever marked
striking fact, the connection of the successive st
of the soul? — how sin can change the countena
undermine the health, produce restlessness? Th
you the grave will end all that? — that, by some m
change, the moral being shall be buried there, and
soul rise again so changed in every feeling that
very identity of being would be lost, and it wo
amount to the creation of a new soul? Say you
God is love? O! but look round this world.
aspect of things is stern; very stern. If they be r
by love, it is a love which does not shrink from hu
agony. There is a law of infinite mercy here, but th
is a law of boundless rigor too. Sin, and you will
fer — that law is not reversed. The young, and
gentle, and the tender, are inexorably subjected t
We would shield them, if we could; but there is
which says they shall not be shielded. They s
weep, and fade, and taste of mortal anguish, ever

others. Carry that out into the next world, and you have "wrath to come."

John's baptism, besides, implied the importance of confession. "They were baptized . . . . confessing their sins." On the eve of a promised new life, they were required to acknowledge the iniquity of past life. In the cure of our spiritual maladies there is a wondrous efficacy, to use a homely phrase, in making a "clean breast." There is something strengthening, something soothing, and at the same time something humbling, in acknowledging that we have done wrong. There is a pride in us which cannot bear pity. There is a diseased sensitiveness which shrinks from the smart of acknowledgment; and yet that smart must be borne before we can be truly soothed. When was it that the younger son in the parable received the ring, and the robe, and the banquet, which represent the rapture of the sense of being forgiven?—When he had fortitude enough to go back mile by mile, step by step, every inch of the way he had gone wrong; bore unflinchingly the sneer of his father's domestics, and, worse than all, the sarcasms of his immaculate brother, and manfully said out, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee." When was it that the publican went down *justified* to his house?—When he said, even before a supercilious Pharisee, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" When did the royal delinquent hear the words, "The Lord hath also put away thy sin"?—When he gave the sacrifice of his lips—"I have sinned before the Lord." And when did the Church of Ephesus rise into the brightest model of a perfect Church that has yet been exhibited on earth?—After her converts had publicly come forward, burnt those

manuscripts which were called "Ephesian letters," t
the value of fifty thousand pieces of silver, "confesse
and showed their deeds." There is a profound trut
in the popular anxiety that a murderer should confe
before he dies. It is an instinctive feeling that a tru
death is better than a false life; that to die with una
knowledged guilt is a kind of lie. To acknowledg
his sin is to put it from him, to abjure it, refuse t
acknowledge it, separate it from him,—to say, I wi
keep it as mine no more: then it is gone. Who has
secret of guilt lying like lead upon his heart? As l
values serenity of soul, let that secret be made know
And if there be one to-day who is impressed c
touched by all this, let him beware how he procrast
nates that which was done when John baptized. Th
iron that once was cooled may never be warme
again; the heart that has once had its flood-gat
open, and has delayed to pour out the stagnation c
its wretchedness, may be closed forever.

Once more; John's baptism implied the necessit
of a renewal of heart. We lose part of the signi
cance of that ceremony from its transplantation awa
from a climate in which it was natural and appr
priate.

Ablution in the East is almost a religious duty. Th
dust and heat weigh upon the spirits and heart like
load; the removal is refreshment and happiness. An
it was impossible to see that significant act — in whic
the convert went down into the water, travel-worn an
soiled with dust, disappeared for one moment, an
then emerged pure and fresh — without feeling tha
the symbol answered to, and interpreted, a stron
craving of the human heart. It is the desire to was

away that which is past and evil. We would fain go to another country and begin life afresh. We look upon the grave almost with complacency, from the fancy that there we shall lie down to sleep and wake fresh and new. It was this same longing that expressed itself in heathenism by the fabled river of forgetfulness, of which the dead must drink before they can enter into rest.

Now, to that craving John gave reality and meaning when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" For else that craving is but a sick, fond wish. Had John merely said, "Flee from the wrath to come!" he would have filled man's life with the terrors of anticipated hell. Had he only said, "My baptism implies that ye must be pure," he would have crushed men's hearts with the feeling of impossibility; for excellence without Christ is but a dream. He gave meaning and promise to all when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."

Sin-laden and guilty men — the end of all the Christian ministry is to say that out with power, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Divine life and death! to have had one glimpse of which, with its ennobling impulses, it were worth while to have endured a life of suffering. When we believe that the sacrifice of that Lamb meant love to us, our hearts are lightened of their load; the past becomes as nothing, and life begins afresh. Christ is the River of Forgetfulness in which bygone guilt is overwhelmed.

II. The Baptist's astonishment at his own success.

It was a singular scene which was exhibited in those days on the banks of Jordan. There was a crowd

of human beings, each having a history of his own — men who have long mouldered in earth's dust, but who were living then in fresh and vigorous existence. Think of it. Busy life was moving there, beings who had their hopes and fears about time and eternity, to whom life was dear as it is to us at this day. They had come to be cured of that worst of human maladies, the aching of a hollow heart; and a single mortified man was bending over them, whose countenance bore all that peculiar aspect of saintliness which comes from spare diet and austere habits, and all that unruffled composure which comes from lonely communings with God: — a solitary man, who had led a hermit's life, but was possessed of rare sagacity in worldly matters; — for, hermit as he was, John took no half-views of men and things; there was nothing morbid in his view of life; there was sound common sense in the advice he gave the different classes which came to him. "Repent," with him, did not mean, Come with me into the wilderness, to live away from the world; but it meant this: Go back to the world, and live above it, each doing his work in an unworldly spirit. It was a strange spectacle, men of the world coming with implicit reverence to learn the duties of active life from a man whose world was the desert, and who knew nothing of active life except by hearsay.

Now, what was the secret of this power by which he chained the hearts of men as by a spell?

One point in the secret of this success was a thing which we see every day. Men of thought and quiet contemplation exercise a wonderful influence over men of action. We admire that which we are not ourselves. The man of business owns the control of

the man of religious thoughtfulness. Like coalesces in this world with unlike. The strong and the weak, the contemplative and the active, bind themselves together. They are necessary for each other. The active soldiers and the scheming publicans came to the lonely, ascetic John, to hear something of that still, inner life, of which their own career could tell them nothing.

A second cause of this success appears to have been, that it was a ministry of terror. Fear has a peculiar fascination. As children love the tale of the supernatural, which yet makes them shudder, so do men, as it would seem, find a delight in the pictures of eternal woe which terrify them; partly from the pleasure which there is in vivid emotions, and partly, perhaps, from a kind of feeling of expiation in the horror which is experienced. You could not go among the dullest set of rustics and preach graphically and terribly of hell-fire, without insuring a large audience. The preaching of John, in this respect, differed from the tone of Christ's. Christ taught much that God is Love. He spoke a great deal of the Father which is in Heaven. He instructed in those parables which required thoughtful attention, exercise of mind, and a gently sensitive conscience. He spoke didactic, calm discourses, very engaging, but with little excitement in them: such discourses as the Sermon on the Mount, respecting goodness, purity, duties; which, assuredly, if any one were to venture so to speak before a modern congregation, would be stigmatized as a moral essay. Accordingly, His success was much less marked than that of John. No crowds were baptized as His followers: one hundred and twenty,

in an upper chamber, appear to have been the fruits of his life-work. To teach so, is assuredly not the way to make strong impressions; but it is the way to work deeply, gloriously — for eternity. How many of John's terrified Pharisees and Sadducees, suppose we, retained the impression six months?

What is your religion? Excitability, romance, impression, fear? Remember, excitement has its uses; impression has its value. John, in all circumstances of his appearance and style of teaching, impressed by excitement. Excitement, warmed feelings, make the first actings of religious life and the breaking of inveterate habits easier. But excitement and impression are not religion. Neither can you trust to the alarm produced by the thought of eternal retribution. Ye that have been impressed, beware how you let those impressions die away! Die they will, and must; we cannot live in excitement forever; but beware of their leaving behind them nothing except a languid, jaded heart. If God ever gave you the excitements of religion, breaking in upon your monotony, as John's teaching broke in upon that of Jerusalem, take care. There is no restoring of elasticity to the spring that has been over-bent. Let impression pass on at once to acting.

We have another cause to assign for John's success. Men felt that he was real. Reality is the secret of all success. Religion in Jerusalem had long become a thing of forms. Men had settled into a routine of externals, as if all religion centred in these. Decencies and proprieties formed the substance of human life. And here was a man in God's world once more who felt that religion is an ever-

lasting reality. Here was a man once more to tell the world that life is sliding into the abyss; that all we see is but a shadow; that the invisible Life within is the only real. Here was a man who could feel the splendors of God shining into his soul in the desert without the aid of forms. His locust-food, his hair-garment, his indifference to earthly comforts, spoke out once more that one at least, could make it a conviction to live and die upon, that man does not live on bread alone, but on the living word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And when that crowd dispersed at sunset, and John was left alone in the twilight, with the infinite of darkness deepening round him, and the roll of Jordan by his side, reflecting the chaste clear stars, there was something there higher than Pharisaic forms to speak to him: — there was heaven and eternity to force him to be real. This life was swiftly passing. What was it to a man living like John, but a show and a dream? He was homeless upon earth. Well — but beyond — beyond — in the blue eternities above, there was the prophet's home. He had cut himself off from the solaces of life. He was to make an enemy of the man of honor, Herod. He had made an enemy of the man of religion, the Pharisee. But he was passing into that country where it matters little whether a man has been clothed in finest linen or in coarsest camel's hair; that still country, where the struggle-storm of life is over, and such as John find their rest at last in the home of God, which is reserved for the True and Brave. If perpetual familiarity with such thoughts as these cannot make a man real, there is nothing in this world that can.

And now, look at this man, so disciplined. Life to John was a reality. The citizens of Jerusalem could not go to him, as they might have gone to the schools of their Rabbis for learned subtleties, or to the groves of Athenian literature for melting imagery. Speech falls from him sharp, rugged, cutting, — a word and no more. — "Repent!" — "wrath to come." — 'The axe is laid at the root of the trees." — 'Fruitless trees will be cast into the fire." He spoke as men speak when they are in earnest, — simply and abruptly, as if the graces of oratory were out of place. And, then, that life of his! The world could understand it. There was written on it, in letters that needed no magnifying-glass to read, "Not of this world."

It is, after all, this which tells, — the reality of unworldliness. The world is looking on to see what religious people mean. It has a most profound contempt for unreality. Such a man as John comes before them. Well, we understand that: — we do not like him: get him out of the way, and kill him if he interferes with us, — but it is genuine. Then they turn and see other men drawing ingenious distinctions between one kind of amusement and another, — indulging themselves on the Sabbath-day, and condemning others who do similar things, and calling that unworldliness. They see that a religious man has a shrewd eye to his interests; is quick at making a bargain, captivated by show and ostentation, affects titled society. The world is very keen-sighted; it looks through the excitement of your religious meetings, quietly watches the zest of your scandal, scans your consciousness, and the question which the world

keeps putting pertinaciously is, Are these men in earnest? Is it any marvel if Christian unreality is the subject of scoffs and bitter irony?

Let men see that you are real, — inconsistent, it may be, sinful; — O, full of sin, — impetuous, hasty, perhaps stern; — John was! But compel them to feel that you are in earnest. This is the secret of influence.

So much, then, for the causes of success. Now, let us analyze that success a little more closely, by considering the classes of men on whom that influence told.

First of all, we read of soldiers, publicans, and the poor people, coming to John for advice, and with the acknowledgment of guilt; and we do not read that their arrival excited the smallest emotion of astonishment in John's bosom. The wonder was not there. No wonder that the poor, whose lot in this world is hard, should look wistfully for another. No wonder that soldiers, with their prompt habits of obedience and their perpetual opportunities of self-devotion, should recognize with reverence the type of heroic life which John presented. No wonder that the guilty publicans should come for purification of heart. For is it not true that the world's outcasts may be led by their very sin to Christ? It is no wonder to see a saddened sinner seeking, in the disappointment and weariness of solitary age, that which he rejected in the heat of youth. Why, even the world is not astonished when it sees the sinner become the saint. Of course, the world has its own sarcastic account to give. Dissipation leads to weariness, and weariness to satiety, and satiety to devotion; and so your great sinner becomes a great saint,

and serves God when all his emotions are exhausted—Be it so. He who knew our nature well knew that marvellous revolutions go on in the soul of a man whom the world counts lost. In our wildest wanderings there is sometimes a love, strong as a father's, tender as a mother's, watching over us, and bringing back the erring child again. Know you not the law of nature? Have you never seen how out of chaos and ferment nature brings order again — life out of death, beauty out of corruption? Such, gainsay it who will, often is the history of the rise of saintliness and purity out of a disappointed, bruised, and penitent spirit. When the life-hopes have become a wreck; when the cravings of the heart for keen excitement have been ministered to so abundantly as to leave nothing but loathing and self-reproach behind; when innocence of heart is gone; yes, even then — scoff who will — the voice of Him is heard, who so dearly purchased the right to say it: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

John was not surprised that such came to him, owning the power of life-giving truth.

But among those who came there were two classes who did move him to marvel. The first was the moral, self-satisfied formalist. The second was the calm, metaphysical, reasoning infidel. When he saw the Pharisees and Sadducees coming, he said, "Who hath warned *you?*"

Now, who were these men?

The Pharisees were men who rested satisfied with the outward. The form of religion, which varies in all ages, *that* they wanted to stereotype. The inner

heart of religion—the unchangeable—justice, mercy, truth—that they could not feel. They had got their two schools of orthodoxy, the school of Shammai and the school of Hillel; and under the orthodoxy of these popular idols of the day, they were content to lose their own power of independent thought. Souls that had shrunk away from all goodness and nobleness, and withered into the mummy of a soul. They could jangle about the breadth of a phylactery. They could discuss, as if it were a matter of life and death, ecclesiastical questions about tithe. They could decide, to a furlong, the length of journey allowable on the Sabbath-day. But they could not look with mercy upon a broken heart, pouring itself out to God in His temple; nor suffer a hungry man to rub an ear of corn on the Sabbath; nor cover the shame of a tempted sister or an erring brother. Men without souls, from whose narrow hearts the grandeur of everlasting truth was shut out.

There was another class in Israel, as different from the Pharisees as man can be from man. The Sadducee could not be satisfied with the creed of Pharisaism, and had begun to cross-examine its pretensions. They felt that the thing which stood before them there, challenging the exclusive name of religion, with its washing of cups, its fastings, its parchment texts,—this and nothing in it of the Eternal and the Infinite: this comes not from the Almighty God; and so from doubt they passed on to denial. The usual order had taken place. The reäction from superstition is infidelity. The reäction from ultra-strictness is laxity. The reäction from Pharisaism was the Sadducee. And the Sadducee, with a dreadful daring, had had the

firmness to say: "Well, then, there is no life to com
That is settled. I have looked into the abyss witho
trembling. There is no phantom there. There
neither angel, spirit, nor life to come. And this glo
ous thing, man, with his deep thoughts, and his grea
unsatisfied heart, his sorrows and his loves, godlik
and immortal as he seems, is but dust animated for
time, passing into the nothingness out of which h
came." That cold and hopeless creed was the cree
of Sadduceeism. Human souls were trying to live o
that, and find it enough.

And the strange thing was, that these men, so pos
tive in their creed, so distinct in their denial, so into
erant of the very name of future existence, crowde
to John to make those confessions, and promise th
new life, which were meet for men who desired to fl
from the wrath to come. Wrath to come! What ha
the infidel to do with that? Repentance unto life
Why should the denier of life listen to that? Frui
meet for repentance! What had the formalist to d
with that rebuke, whose life was already all that cou
be needed? "O generation of vipers," said th
prophet, in astonishment, "who hath warned *you* t
flee from the wrath to come?"

I deduce, from those facts which astonished Joh
two truths. Formalism, even morality, will not satis
the conscience of man. Infidelity will not give rest
his troubled spirit. It is a pregnant lesson, if we w
only read it thoughtfully, to consider those two class
going up for baptism. That heart of man which th
moralist tells us is so pure and excellent, the light o
day has shone into it, and behold, in the moralist's se
it is not pure, but polluted and miserable; else, wh

has that Pharisee to do with the symbol of new life which he is gone to John to use? That clear, unbiased intellect with which the sceptic reached his conclusions, behold it is not clear nor unbiased! It has been warped by an evil life. His heart is restless, and dark, and desolate; else why is that Sadducee trembling on Jordan's brink? There is a something which they want, both Pharisee and Sadducee, and they come to see if baptism will give it them. Strangely moved indeed must those men have been—ay, shaken to the inmost soul—before they could so contradict their own profession as to acknowledge that there was a hollowness in their hearts. We almost fancy we can stand at the water's edge and hear the confession which was wrung from their lips, hot-burning and choked with sobs, during the single hour in which reality had forced itself upon their souls:—"It is a lie—we are *not* happy—we are miserable. Prophet of the Invisible! what hast thou got to tell us of that awful other world?"

For, when man comes to front the everlasting God, and look the splendor of his judgments in the face, personal integrity, the dream of spotlessness and innocence, vanish into thin air: your decencies, and your church-goings, and your regularities, and your attachment to a correct school and party, your Gospel formulas of sound doctrine,—what is all that in front of the blaze of the wrath to come?

And scepticism, too, how philosophical soever, and how manly it may appear, will it rock the conscience with an everlasting lullaby? Will it make, with all its reasonings, the tooth of the worm less sharp, and the fire less fierce that smoulders inwardly? Let but the

plain, true man speak. We ask from him no rhetc
We require no eloquence. Let him but say, in
earnestness, Repent, or, Wrath to come; and t
what has infidelity got to fall back upon?

There is rest in this world nowhere except in Cl
the Manifested Love of God. Trust in excellence,
the better you become, the keener is the feeling
deficiency. Wrap up all in doubt, and there is a s
voice that will thunder at last out of the wilder
upon your dream.

A heart renewed, a loving heart, a penitent
humble heart, a heart broken and contrite, puri
by love,—that, and only that, is the rest of man. S
lessness may do for angels,—Repentance unto Lil
the highest that belongs to man.

IX.

[Preached November 25, 1849.]

CAIAPHAS' VIEW OF VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

John xi. 49–58. — "And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then, from that day forth, they took counsel together for to put him to death."

On this occasion, the first resolution passed the Jewish Sanhedrim to compass the death of Jesus. The immediate occasion of their meeting was the fame of the resurrection of Lazarus. There were many causes which made the Saviour obnoxious to the Priests and Pharisees. If that teaching were once received, their reign was over: a teaching which abolished the pretensions of a priesthood, by making every man his own priest, to offer spiritual sacrifices to God; which identified Religion with Goodness, — making spiritual excellence, not ritual regularity, the righteousness which God accepts; which brought God within reach of the sinner and the fallen; which simplified the whole matter, by making Religion a thing of the heart, and

not of rabbinical learning or theology:—such teaching swept away all the exclusive pretensions of Pharisaism made the life which they had been building up with so much toil for years time wasted, and reduced their whole existence to a lie.

This was the ground of their hatred to the Son of Man. But this was not the ground which they put forward. He was tried chiefly on the charge of treason against the emperor; and the argument by which the mind of the judge was principally swayed was, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend." The present passage contains the first trace of the adoption of that ground. "If we let him alone, the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."

Be it observed, then, the real ground of opposition was hatred of the light. The ostensible ground was patriotism, public zeal, loyalty, far-sighted policy: and such is life. The motive on which a deed of sin is done is not the motive which a man allows to others, or whispers to himself. Listen to the criminal receiving sentence, and the cause of condemnation is not the enormity of the crime, but the injustice of the country's law. Hear the man of disorderly life, whom society has expelled from her bosom, and the cause of the expulsion is not his profligacy but the false slander which has misrepresented him. Take his own account of the matter, and he is innocent, injured, pure. For there are names so tender, and so full of fond endearment, with which this world sugars over its dark guilt towards God with a crust of superficial whiteness, that the Sin, on which eighteen centuries have looked back appalled, to the doors of that Sin was

nothing atrocious, but respectable, defensible, nay, even, under the circumstances, necessary.

The judgment of one of these righteous murderers was given in remarkable terms. Apparently there were some in the council, such men as Nicodemus, who could not acquiesce in the view given of the matter. Doubtless they alleged the unfairness of the proceeding, and the innocence of the Accused; upon which Caiaphas replied, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." The remarkable point in this judgment is, that it contained the very central doctrine of Christianity: unconsciously, Caiaphas had uttered the profoundest of all truths, the necessity of the suffering of the Innocent for the guilty. He had stated it in the very words which St. John could have himself adopted. But they meant one thing in the lips of holy Love, and quite another thing in the lips of tyrannical Policy. Yet St. John, contemplating that sentence years after, could not but feel that there was something in those words deeper than met the ear,—a truth almost inspired, which he did not hesitate to call prophetic. "Being high priest that year, he *prophesied.*"

We must not, therefore, call this merely a singular coincidence. It was the same truth viewed from different sides: the side of Caiaphas, and the side of John; the side of the world, and the side of God. That truth was the vicarious Sacrifice of Christ.

And there are two ways in which you may contemplate the Sacrifice. Seen from the world's point of view, it is unjust, gross, cruel. Seen as John saw it, and as God looks at it, it was the sublimest of all truths;

one which so entwines itself with our religious consciousness, that you might as soon tear from us our very being, as our convictions of the reality of Christ's Atonement. Our subject, then, is the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. The words of Caiaphas contain a formal falsehood and a material truth; the outward statement, and an inspired or prophetic inward verity; so that the subject branches into two topics:

I. The human form, in which the words are false.

II. The divine principle or spirit, in which they are true.

I. The human form, in which the words are false.

Vicarious means in the stead of. When the Pope calls himself the vicar of Christ, he means that he is empowered in the stead of Christ to absolve, decree, &c. When we speak of vicarious suffering, we mean that suffering which is endured in another's stead, and not as the sufferer's own desert.

1. The first falsity in the human statement of that truth of vicarious sacrifice is its injustice. Some one said the Accused is innocent. The reply was — Better that one should die than many. "It is expedient for us that one should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." It was simply with Caiaphas a question of numbers: the unjust expediency of wresting the law a little to do much apparent good. The reply to that was plain. Expediency cannot obliterate Right and Wrong. Expediency may choose the best possible when the conceivable best is not attainable; but in right and wrong there is no better and best. Thou *shalt* not do wrong. Thou *must* not: you may not tell a lie to save life. Better that the

whole Jewish nation should perish, than that a Jewish legislature should steep its hand in the blood of one innocent. It is *not* expedient to do injustice.

There are cases in which it is expedient to choose the sacrifice of one instead of that of many: when a whole army or regiment has mutinied, the commander, instead of general butchery, may select a few to perish as examples to the rest. There is nothing here unjust. The many escape, but the few who die deserved to die. But no principle could justify a commander in selecting an innocent man, condemning him by unjust sentence, and affecting to believe that he was guilty, while the transgressors escaped, and learned the enormity of their transgressions by seeing execution done upon the guiltless. No principle can justify, nothing can do more than palliate, the conduct of the ship's crew upon the raft who slay one of their number to support their existence on his flesh. No man would justify the parent, pursued in his chariot by wolves over Siberian snows, who throws out one of his children to the pack, that the rest may escape while their fangs are buried in their victim. You feel, at once, expediency has no place here. Life is a trifle compared with Law. Better that all should perish by a visitation of God, than that they should be saved by one murder.

I do not deny that this aspect has been given to the sacrifice of Christ. It has been represented as if the majesty of law demanded a victim; and so as it glutted its insatiate thirst, one victim would do as well as another — the purer and the more innocent, the better. It has been exhibited as if Eternal Love resolved in fury to strike; and so as He had His blow, it mattered

not whether it fell on the whole world, or on the precious head of His own chosen Son.

Unitarianism has represented the Scriptural view in this way; or, rather, perhaps, we should say, it has been so represented to Unitarianism; and from a view so horrible no wonder if Unitarianism has recoiled. But it is not our fault if some blind defenders of the truth have converted the self-devotion of Love into a Brahminical sacrifice. If the Work of Redemption be defended by parallels drawn from the most atrocious records and principles of Heathenism, let not the fault be laid upon the Bible. We disclaim that as well as they. It makes God a Caiaphas. It makes Him adopt the words of Caiaphas in the sense of Caiaphas. It represents Him in terms which better describe the ungoverned rage of Saul, missing his stroke at David, who has offended, and in disappointed fury dashing his javelin at his own son Jonathan.

You must not represent the Atonement as depending on the justice of unrighteous expediency.

2. This side of viewing the truth was the side of selfishness. It was not even the calm resolve of men balancing whether it be better for one to die or many; but whether it is better that He or we should perish. It is conceivable in the case supposed above that a parent in the horrible dilemma should be enough bewildered to resolve to sacrifice one rather than lose all; but it is not conceivable that the doubt in his mind should be this, — Shall *I* and the rest perish, or this one? Yet this was the spirit in which the party of Caiaphas spoke. The Romans will come and take away *our* place and *our* nation.

And this spirit, too, is in human nature. The rec-

ords of antiquity are full of it. If a fleet could not sail, it was assumed that the deities were offended. The purest and tenderest maiden of the royal household was selected to bleed upon the altar; and when the sharp knife passed to her innocent heart, this was the feeling in the bosoms of those stern and unrelenting warriors — of the blood and of the stock of Caiaphas — better she than we.

This *may* be the way in which the sacrifice of Christ is regarded by us. There is a kind of acquiescence in the Atonement which is purely selfish. The more bloody the representation of the character of God, the greater, of course, the satisfaction in feeling sheltered from it. The more wrath instead of Love is believed to be the Divine name, the more may a man find joy in believing that he is safe. It is the Siberian feeling: the innocent has glutted the wolves, and we may pursue our journey in safety. Christ has suffered, and I am safe. He bore the agony — I take the reward. I may live now with impunity; and, of course, it is very easy to call acquiescence in that arrangement humility, and to take credit for the abnegation of self-righteousness; but whoever can acquiesce in that thought chiefly in reference to personal safety, and, without desiring to share the Redeemer's Cross, aspire to enjoy the comforts and the benefits of the Redeemer's sacrifice, has but something of the spirit of Caiaphas, after all, the spirit which contentedly sacrifices Another for self, — selfishness assuming the form of wisdom.

II. We pass to the prophetic or hidden spirit in which these words are true.

I observe, first, that vicarious sacrifice is the Law

of Being. It is a mysterious and a fearful thing to observe how all God's universe is built upon this law; how it penetrates and pervades all Nature, so that if it were to cease Nature would cease to exist. Hearken to the Saviour himself expounding this principle: —"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." We are justified, therefore, in assuming the Law of Nature to be the Law of His own Sacrifice, for He himself represents it as the parallel.

Now, observe this world of God's. The mountain-rock must have its surface rusted into putrescence and become dead soil, before the herb can grow. The destruction of the mineral is the life of the vegetable. Again the same process begins. The "corn of wheat dies," and out of death more abundant life is born. Out of the soil in which deciduous leaves are buried the young tree shoots vigorously, and strikes its roots deep down into the realm of decay and death. Upon the life of the vegetable world the myriad forms of higher life sustain themselves, — still the same law: the sacrifice of life to give life. Further still. Have we never pondered over that mystery of nature, the dove struck down by the hawk, the deer trembling beneath the stroke of the lion, the winged fish falling into the jaws of the dolphin? It is the solemn law of vicarious sacrifice again. And as often as man sees his table covered with the flesh of animals slain, does he behold, whether he think of it or not, the deep mystery and law of being. They have surrendered their innocent lives that he may live. Nay, further still, — it is as impossible for man to live as it is for man to be redeemed, except through vicarious suf-

fering. The anguish of the mother is the condition of the child's life. His very being has its roots in the law of sacrifice; and, from his birth onwards, instinctively this becomes the law which rules his existence. There is no blessing which was ever enjoyed by man which did not come through this. There was never a country cleared for civilization, and purified of its swamps and forests, but the first settlers paid the penalty of that which their successors enjoy. There never was a victory won, but the conquerors who took possession of the conquest passed over the bodies of the noblest slain, who died that they might win.

Now, observe, all this is the law obeyed, either unconsciously or else instinctively. But, in the redemption of our humanity, a moment comes when that law is recognized as the will of God adopted *consciously*, and voluntarily obeyed as the law of man's existence. Then it is that man's true nobleness, his only possible blessedness, and his redemption from blind instincts and mere selfishness, begin. You may evade that law; you may succeed in living as Caiaphas did—sacrificing others, instead of yourself; and men will call you wise, and prudent, and respectable. But you are only a Caiaphas. Redeemed you are not. Your proper humanity has not begun.

The Highest man recognized that law, and joyfully embraced it as the law of His existence. It was the consciousness of His surrender to that as God's will, and the voluntariness of the act, which made it sacrifice. Hear Him: "No man taketh my life from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." "*This commandment have I received*

from my Father." Had he been by the wiles of Caiaphas simply surprised and dragged struggling and reluctant to doom, he would have been a victim, but not a sacrifice, — he would have been an object of our compassion, but by no means of our adoring wonder. It was the foresight of all the result of His opposition to the world's sin, and His steady, uncompromising battle against it notwithstanding, in every one of its forms, knowing that He must be its victim at the last, which prevented His death from being merely the death of a lamb slain unconsciously on Jewish altars, and elevates it to the dignity of a true and proper sacrifice.

We go beyond this, however. It was not merely a sacrifice, — it was a sacrifice for sin. "His soul was made an offering for sin. Neither was it only a sacrifice for sin, — it was a sacrifice for the *world's* sin. In the text, "that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

Two ideas are necessary to be distinctly apprehended by us in order to understand that. The first is, the notion of punishment; the second is, the idea of the world's sin.

By punishment is simply meant the penalty annexed to transgression of a law. Punishment is of two kinds: the penalty which follows ignorant transgression, and the chastisement which ensues upon wilful disobedience. The first of these is called imputed guilt; the second is actual guilt. By imputed guilt is meant, in theological language, that a person is treated as if he were guilty. If, for example, you approach

too near the whirling wheel of steam machinery, the mutilation which follows is the punishment of temerity. If the traveller ignorantly lays his hand on the cockatrice's den, the throb of the envenomed fang is the punishment of his ignorance. He has broken a law of nature, and the guilt of the infraction is imputed to him — there is penalty; but there is none of the chastisement which follows sin. His conscience is not made miserable. He only suffers. Further, — according to the constitution of this world, it is not only our own transgressions of ignorance, but, besides, the faults of others, which bring pain and sorrow on us. The man of irritable and miserably nervous temperament owes that often to a father's intemperance. Many a man has to struggle all his life with the penury which he reaps as the harvest of a distant ancestor's extravagance. In the strictest sense of the word, these are punishments — the consequences annexed to transgression; and, in the language of theology, they are called imputed guilt. But there is an all-important distinction between them and the chastisements of personal iniquity. If a man suffer ill-health or poverty as the results of his own misconduct, his conscience forces him to refer this to the wrath of God. He is reaping as he had sown, and the miseries of conscious fault are added to his penalty. But, if such things come as the penalty of the wrong of others, then, philosophically though you may call them punishments, in the popular sense of the word they are no punishments at all, but rather corrective discipline, — nay, even richest blessings, if they are received from a Father's hand, and transmuted by humbleness into the means of spiritual growth.

Apply all this to the sacrifice of Christ. Let no man say that Christ bore the wrath of God. Let no man say that God was angry with His Son. We are sometimes told of a mysterious anguish which Christ endured, the consequence of Divine wrath, the sufferings of a heart laden with the conscience of the world's transgressions, which He was bearing as if they were His own sins. Do not add to the Bible what is not in the Bible. The Redeemer's conscience was not bewildered to feel *that* His own which was *not* His own. He suffered no wrath of God. Twice came the voice from Heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well pleased*." There was seen an angel strengthening Him. Nay, even to the last, never did the consciousness of purity and the Father's Love forsake Him. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Christ came into collision with the world's evil, and He bore the penalty of that daring. He approached the whirling wheel, and was torn in pieces. He laid His hand upon the cockatrice's den, and its fangs pierced Him. It is the law which governs the conflict with evil. It can be only crushed by suffering from it .... The Son of Man who puts His naked foot on the serpent's head crushes it; but the fang goes into His heel.

The Redeemer bore imputed sin. He bore the penalty of others' sin. He was punished. Did He bear the anger of the Most High? Was His the hell of an accusing conscience? In the Name of Him who is God, not Caiaphas, *never!* Something more, however, is necessary to complete our notion of punishment. It is a right estimate of Law. We are apt to

think of punishment as something quite arbitrary, which can be remitted or changed at will. Hence we almost always connect it with the idea of wrath. Hence the heathen tried to bribe and coax their deities to spare. And hence the sacrifice of Christ comes to be looked upon in the light of a sagacious or ingenious contrivance, a mere "scheme." Now, remember what Law is. The moral laws of this universe are immutable as God himself. Law is the Being of God. God cannot alter those laws: He cannot make wrong right. He cannot make truth falsehood, or falsehood truth. He cannot make sin blessed, nor make hell to innocence. Law moves on its majestic course irresistible. If his chosen Son violates Law, if he throws Himself from the pinnacle, He dies. If you resist a law in its eternal march, the universe crushes you, that is all. Consider what Law is, and then the idea of bloody vengeance passes away altogether from the Sacrifice. It is not "an eye for an eye" and "a tooth for a tooth," in the sanguinary spirit of the old retaliatory legislation. It is the eternal impossibility of violating that law of the universe whereby penalty is annexed to transgression; and must be either laden with curse, or rich in blessing.

The second idea which it behoves us to master is that of the world's sin. The apostle John always viewed sin as a great connected principle; *One;* a single world-spirit — exactly as the electricity with which the universe is charged is indivisible, imponderable, one, so that you cannot separate it from the great ocean of fluid. The electric spark that slumbers in the dew-drop is part of the flood which struck the oak. Had that spark not been there, it could be

demonstrated that the whole previous constitution
the universe might have been different, and the
not struck.

Let us possess ourselves of this view of sin, fo
is the true one. Separate acts of sin are but m
festations of one great principle. It was thus
the Saviour looked on the sins of His day.
Jews of that age had had no hand in the murder of A
or Zacharias; but they were of kindred spirit
the men who slew them. Condemning their
derers, they imitated their act. In that imita
they "allowed the deeds of their fathers;" t
shared in the guilt of the act which had been
summated, because they had the spirit which led t
"The blood of them all shall come on this generatio
It was so, too, that Stephen looked on the act of
assassins. When God's glory streamed upon his f
he felt that the transaction going on then was
simply the violence of a mob in an obscure corner
the world — it was an outbreak of the Great Princ
of evil. He saw in their act the resurrection of
spirit of those who had "resisted the Holy Ghost"
their day, slain the prophets, opposed Moses, crucif
"the Just One;" and felt that their genuine descenda
were now opposing themselves to the form in wh
Truth and Goodness were appearing in their day.

It is in this way only that you will be able, with
reality of feeling, to enter into the truth that your
nailed Him to the cross: that the Lord hath laid
Him the iniquity of us all: that He died "not for t
nation only, but that also He should gather toget
in one the children of God that were scattered abroa
If, for instance, indisputable evidence be given of

saintliness of a man whose creed and views are not yours, and rather than admit that Good in him *is* Good, you invent all manner of possible motives to discredit his excellence, then let the thought arise: This is the resurrection of the spirit which was rampant in the days of Jesus; the spirit of those who saw the purest Goodness, and, rather than acknowledge it to be good, preferred to account for it as diabolical power. Say to yourself, I am verging on the spirit of the sin that was unpardonable; I am crucifying the Son of God afresh. If in society you hear the homage unrebuked, — Honor to the rich man's splendid offering, instead of glory to the widow's humble mite, — if you see the weak and defenceless punished severely for the sins which the great and strong do unblushingly, and even with the connivance and admiration of society, — if you find sins of frailty placed on the same level with sins of pride and presumption, — or if you find guilt of any kind palliated instead of mourned, then let the dreadful thought arise in the fulness of its meaning: I allow the deeds of those days; His blood shall come upon this generation. My sin, and your sin, the sin of all, bears the guilt of the Redeemer's sacrifice. It *was* vicarious. He suffered for what He never did. "Not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

To conclude. Estimate rightly the death of Christ. It was not simply the world's example — it was the world's sacrifice. He died not merely as a Martyr to the Truth. His death is the world's life. Ask yo what life is? Life is not exemption from penalty. Salvation is not escape from suffering and punishment.

The Redeemer suffered punishment; but the Redeeme soul had blessedness in the very midst of punishme Life is elevation of soul — nobleness — Divine char ter. The spirit of Caiaphas was death: to receive and give nothing; to sacrifice others to himself. T spirit of Christ was life: to give and not receive; be sacrificed, and not to sacrifice. . Hear Him again "He that loseth his life, the same shall find it." That life: the spirit of losing all for Love's sake. That the soul's life, which alone is blessedness and heav By realizing that ideal of humanity, Christ furnish the life which we appropriate only when we enter i His spirit.

Listen: — Only by renouncing sin is His death sin yours; only by quitting it are you free from guilt of His blood; only by voluntary acceptance the law of the Cross, self-surrender to the will of G and self-devotion to the good of others as the law your being, do you enter into that present and fut heaven which is the purchase of his vicarious sacrifi

X.

[Preached December 2, 1849.]

REALIZING THE SECOND ADVENT.

Job xix. 25-27.—"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

THE hardest, the severest, the last lesson which man has to learn upon this earth, is submission to the will of God. It is the hardest lesson, because to our blinded eyesight it often seems a cruel will. It is a severe lesson, because it can be only taught by the blighting of much that has been most dear. It is the last lesson, because, when a man has learned that, he is fit to be transplanted from a world of wilfulness to a world in which one Will alone is loved, and only one is done. All that saintly experience ever had to teach resolves itself into this, the lesson how to say affectionately, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Slowly and stubbornly our hearts acquiesce in that. The holiest in this congregation, so far as he has mastered the lesson, will acknowledge that many a sore and angry feeling against his God had to be subdued, many a dream of earthly brightness broken, and many

a burning throb stilled in a proud, resentful heart, before he was willing to suffer God to be sovereign in His own world, and do with him and his as seemed Him best. The earliest record that we have of this struggle in the human bosom is found in this book of Job. It is the most ancient statement we have of the perplexities and mysteries of life, so graphic, so true to nature, that it proclaims at once that what we are reading is drawn not from romance, but life. It has been said that religious experience is but the fictitious creation of a polished age, when fanciful feelings are called into existence by hearts bent back, in reflex action and morbid, on themselves. We have an answer to that in this book. Religion is no morbid fancy. In the rough rude ages when Job lived, when men did not dwell on their feelings as in later centuries, the heart-work of religion was, manifestly, the same earnest, passionate thing that it is now. The heart's misgivings were the same beneath the tent of an Arabian Emir which they are beneath the roof of a modern Christian. Blow after blow fell on the Oriental chieftain: — one day he was a father, a prince, the lord of many vassals and many flocks, and buoyant in one of the best of blessings, health; the next, he was a childless, blighted, ruined man. And then it was that there came from Job's lips those yearnings for the quiet of the grave, which are so touching, so real; and, considering that some of the strongest of the Elect of God have yielded to them for a moment, we might almost say so pardonable: "I should have been at rest — where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. There the prisoners rest together: they hear not the voice of the oppressor. Wherefore is

light given unto him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter of soul—which long for death, but it cometh not, and dig for it more than for hid treasures — which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?" What is the book of Job but the record of an earnest soul's perplexities? The double difficulty of life solved there, the existence of moral evil — the question whether suffering is a mark of wrath or not. What falls from Job's lips is the musing of a man half-stunned, half-surprised, looking out upon the darkness of life, and asking, sorrowfully, Why are these things so? And all that falls from his friends' lips is the commonplace remarks of men upon what is inscrutable; maxims learned second-hand by rote, and not by heart; fragments of deep truths, but truths misapplied, distorted, torn out of all connection of time and place, so as to become actual falsehoods, only blistering a raw wound. It was from these awkward admonitions that Job appealed in the text. He appealed from the tribunal of man's opinion to a tribunal where sincerity shall be cleared and vindicated. He appealed from a world of confusion, where all the foundations of the earth are out of course, to a world where all shall be set right. He appealed from the dark dealings of a God whose way it is to hide Himself, to a God who shall stand upon this earth in the clear radiance of a love on which suspicion's self cannot rest a doubt. It was faith straining through the mist, and discerning the firm land that is beyond. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."

We take two points:—

It is all this added meaning gained from Christ with which we use these words: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." But we must remember that all that was not revealed to Job.

2. The second truth implied in the personal existence of a Redeemer is sympathy. It was the keenest part of Job's trial that no heart beat pulse with his. His friends misunderstood him; and his wife, in a moment of atheistic bitterness, in the spirit of our own infidel poet, "Let no man say that God in mercy gave that stroke," addressed him thus: "Curse God and die." In the midst of this, it seems to have risen upon his heart with a strange power to soothe, that he was not alone. Gall and bitterness were distilling from the lips of man, and molten lead was dropping from the hand of God. But there was a great difference between the two inflictions. Men were doing their work, unknowing of the pain they gave: God was meting out His in the scales of a most exquisite compassion, not one drop too much, and every drop that fell had a meaning of love in it. "Affliction," said the tried man, "cometh not out of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground"—superintending all this, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

And here there is one word full of meaning, from which we collect the truth of sympathy. It is that little word of appropriation, "My" Redeemer. Power is shown by God's attention to the vast: Sympathy, by His condescension to the small. It is not the thought of heaven's sympathy by which we are impressed, when we gaze through the telescope on the mighty world of space, and gain an idea of what is meant by infinite. Majesty and power are there; but the very

[redacted] excludes the thought of sympathy. It is when we look into the world of insignificance, which the microscope reveals, and find that God has gorgeously painted the atoms of creation, and exquisitely furnished forth all that belongs to minutest life, that we feel that God sympathizes and individualizes. When we are told that God is the Redeemer of the *world*, we know that love dwells in the bosom of the Most High; but if we want to know that God feels or acts individually and separately, we must learn by heart this syllable of endearment, "My Redeemer." Child of God! if you would have your thought of God something beyond a cold feeling of His presence, let faith *appropriate* Christ. You are as much the object of God's solicitude as if none lived but yourself. He has counted the hairs of your head. In Old Testament language, "He has put your tears into his bottle." He has numbered your sighs and your smiles. He has interpreted the desires for which you have not found a name nor an utterance yourself. If you have not learned to say *My* Redeemer, then, just so far as there is anything tender or affectionate in your disposition, you will tread the path of your pilgrimage with a darkened and a lonely heart; and when the day of trouble comes, there will be none of that triumphant elasticity which enabled Job to look down, as from a rock, upon the surges which were curling their crests of fury at his feet, but could only reach his bosom with their spent spray.

3. The third thing implied in the present superintendence of God is His vindication of wrongs. The word translated here Redeemer is one of quite peculiar signification. In all the early stages of society, the

redress of wrongs is not a public, but a private act. It was then as now — blood for blood. But the executioner of the law was invested with something of a sacred character. Now, he is the mere creature of a country's law: then he was the delegated Hand of God; for the next of kin to the murdered man stood forward solemnly in God's name as the champion of the defenceless, the *goel*, or Avenger of Blood. Goel is the word here; so that, translated into the language of those far-back days, Job was professing his conviction that there was a Champion, or an Avenger, who would one day do battle for his wrongs.

It is a fearful amount of this kind of work which is in arrear for the Avenger to execute, accumulating century by century, and year by year. From the days of Cain and Abel there have been ever two classes, the oppressor and the oppressed; the gentle, humble ones, who refuse to right themselves, and the unscrupulous, who force them aside. The Church has ever had the world against it. The world struck its first deadly blow by the hand of Cain, and it has been striking ever since — from the battle-field, and the martyr's stake, and the dungeons of the inquisition, and the prisons of the lordly tyrant, the blood of the innocent has cried for vengeance. By taunt and sneer, the world has had her triumph. And the servants of the Meekest have only had *this* to cheer them: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

There is a persecution sharper than that of the axe. There is an iron that goes into the heart deeper than the knife. Cruel sneers, and sarcasms, and pitiless judgments, and cold-hearted calumnies, — these are persecution. There is the tyrant of the nursery, and

the play-ground, and the domestic circle, as well as of the judgment-hall. "Better were it," said the Redeemer, "for that man if a mill-stone had been hanged about his neck." Did you ever do that?—Did you ever pour bitterness into a heart that God was bruising, by a cold laugh, or a sneer, or a galling suspicion?—Into a sister's heart, or a friend's, or even a stranger's? Remember, when you sent them, as Job's friends sent him, to pour out their griefs alone before their Father, your name went up to the Avenger's ears mingled with the cries of His own elect.

There is a second mode in which God interferes in this world's affairs. There is a present superintendence perceived by faith. But there is a future redress which will be made manifest to sight. "He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." I shall see Him.

First of all, there will be a visible personal interference. All that Job meant was in the case of his own wrongs. But, if *we* use those words, we must apply them in a higher sense. The Second Advent of Christ is supposed by some to mean an appearance of Jesus in the flesh, to reign and triumph visibly. Others, who feel that the visual perception of His Form would be a small blessing, and that the highest and truest presence is always spiritual, and realized by the spirit, believe that His advent will be a coming in Power. We will not dispute: controversy whets the intellect, and only starves, or, worse, poisons the heart. We will take what is certain. Every signal manifestation of the right and vindication of the truth in judgment is called in Scripture a coming of the Son of Man. A Personal Advent of the Redeemer is one

which can be perceived by foes, as well as recognized by friends. The destruction of Jerusalem, recognized by the heathen themselves as judgment, is called in the Bible a coming of Christ. In the Deluge, in the destruction of the cities of the plain, in the confusion of tongues, God is said to have come down to visit the earth. There are two classes, then, who shall see that sight. Men like Job, who feel that their Redeemer liveth; and men like Balaam, from whose lips words of truth, terrible to him, came: "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh." "Every eye shall see Him." *You* will see the triumph of the Right — the destruction of the Wrong. The awful question is: As Balaam — or as Job? Besides this, it will be unexpected; every judgment of Christ is as the springing of a mine. There is a moment of deep suspense after the match has been applied to the fuse which is to fire the train. Men stand at a distance and hold their breath. There is nothing seen but a thin, small column of white smoke, rising fainter and fainter, till it seems to die away. Then men breathe again, and the inexperienced soldier would approach the place, thinking that the thing has been a failure. It is only faith in the experience of the commander, or the veterans, which keeps men from hurrying to the spot again, — till, just when expectation has begun to die away, the low, deep thunder sends up the column of earth majestically to heaven, and all that was on it comes crashing down again in its far circle, shattered and blackened with the blast.

It is so with this world. By God's word the world is doomed. The moment of suspense is past: the first

centuries, in which men expected the convulsion to take place at once; and even Apostles were looking for it in their lifetime. We have fallen upon days of scepticism. There are no signs of ruin yet. We tread upon it like a solid thing, fortified by its adamantine hills forever. There is nothing against that but a few words in a printed book. But the world is mined, and the spark has fallen, and just at the moment when serenity is at its height, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," and the feet of the Avenger shall stand on Earth.

II. The means of realizing this interference.

There is a difference between knowing a thing and realizing it. When a poor man becomes suddenly the possessor of a fortune, or of dignity, it is some time before the thing becomes so natural to him that he can act in his new sphere like his proper self, — it is all strangeness at first. When the criminal hears the death-sentence in the dock, his cheeks are tearless. He hears the words, but scarcely understands that they have anything to do with him. He has not realized that it is he himself that has to die. When bereavement comes, it is not at the moment when the breath leaves the body that we feel what has been lost — we know, but we must have it in detail - see the empty chair, and the clothes that will never be worn again, and perceive day after day pass and he comes not. Then we realize.

Job *knew* that God was the vindicator of wrongs, — that he said. But why did he go on repeating in every possible form the same thing: "I shall see God,

see Him for myself, mine eyes shall behold Him; yes, mine, and not another's?" It would seem as if he were doing what a man does when he repeats over and over to himself a thing which he cannot picture out in its reality. It was true; but it was strange, and shadowy, and unfamiliar.

It is no matter of uncertainty to any one of us whether he himself shall die. He knows it. Every time the funeral bell tolls, the thought in some shape suggests itself, — I am a mortal, dying man. That is knowing it. Which of us has realized it? Who can shut his eyes, and bring it before him as a reality, that the day will come when the hearse will stand at the door for him, and that all this bright world will be going on without him; and that the very flesh which now walks about so complacently will have the coffin-lid shut down upon it, and be left to darkness, and loneliness, and silence, and the worm? Or, take a case still more closely suggested by the text, — out of the grave we must rise again, — long after all that is young, and strong, and beautiful, before me, shall have mouldered into forgetfulness. Earth shall hear her Master's voice breaking the long silence of the centuries, and our dust shall hear it, and stand up among the myriads that are moving on to judgment. Each man in his own proper identity, his very self, must see God, and be seen by Him, — looking out on the strange new scene, and doomed to be an actor in it for all eternity. We *know* that, — on which of our hearts is it stamped, not as a doctrine to be proved by texts, but as one of those things which must be hereafter, and in sight of which we are to live now?

There are two ways suggested to us by this passage

for realizing these things. The first of these is meditation. No man forgets what the mind has dwelt long on. It is not by a passing glance that things become riveted in the memory. It is by forcing the memory to call them up again and again in leisure hours. It is in the power of meditation so to bring danger in its reality before the imagination, that the whole frame can start instinctively as if the blow were falling, or as if the precipice were near. It is in the power of meditation so to engrave scenes of loveliness on a painter's eye, that he transfers to the canvas a vivid picture that was real to him before it was real to others. It is in the power of meditation so to abstract the soul from all that is passing before the bodily eye, that the tongue shall absently speak out the words with which the heart was full, not knowing that the others are standing by. It seems to have been this that Job was doing, — he was realizing by meditation. You can scarcely read over these words without fancying them the syllables of a man who was thinking aloud.

It is like a soliloquy rather than a conversation. "I shall see Him." Myself. Not another. My own eyes.

This is what we want. It is good for a man to get alone, and then in silence think upon his own death, and feel how time is hurrying him along: that a little while ago, and he was not, — a little while still, and he will be no more. It is good to take the Bible in his hands, and read those passages at this season of the year which speak of the Coming and the end of all, till from the printed syllables there seems to come out something that has life, and form, and substance in it,

and all things that are passing in the world group themselves in preparation for that, and melt into its outline. Let us try to live with these things in view. God our friend; Christ our living Redeemer; our sympathizing Brother; our conquering Champion: — the triumph of Truth; the End of Wrong. We shall live upon realities then; and this world will fade away into that which we know it is, but cannot realize — an Appearance, and a Shadow.

Lastly; God insures that his children shall realize all this by affliction. Job had admitted these things before, but this time he spoke from the ashes on which he was writhing. And if ever a man is sincere it is when he is in pain. If ever that superficial covering of conventionalities falls from the soul, which gathers round it as the cuticle does upon the body, and the rust upon the metal, it is when men are suffering. There are many things which nothing but sorrow can teach us. Sorrow is the great Teacher. Sorrow is the Realizer. It is a strange and touching thing to hear the young speak truths which are not yet within the limits of their experience: to listen while they say that life is sorrowful, that friends are treacherous, that there is quiet in the grave. When we are boys we adopt the phrases that we hear. In a kind of prodigal excess of happiness, we say that the world is a dream, and life a nothing — that eternity lasts forever, and that all here is disappointment. But there comes a day of sharpness, when we find, to our surprise, that what we said had a meaning in it; and we are startled. That is the sentimentalism of youth passing into reality. In the lips of the young such phrases are only sentimentalities. What we mean by

sentimentalism is that state in which a man speaks things deep and true, not because he feels them strongly, but because he perceives that they are beautiful, and that it is touching and fine to say them, — things which he fain *would* feel, and fancies that he *does* feel. Therefore, when all is well, when friends abound, and health is strong, and the comforts of life are around us, religion becomes faint, and shadowy. Religious phraseology passes into cant — the gay, and light, and trifling, use the same words as the holiest; till the earnest man, who *feels* what the world is sentimentalizing about, shuts up his heart, and either coins other phrases or else keeps silence. And then it is that, if God would rescue a man from that unreal world of names and mere knowledge, He does what He did with Job, — He strips him of his flocks, and his herds, and his wealth; or else, what is the equivalent, of the power of enjoying them — the desire of his eyes falls from him at a stroke. Things become real then. Trial brings man face to face with God — God and he touch; and the flimsy veil of bright cloud that hung between him and the sky is blown away: he feels that he is standing outside the earth, with nothing between him and the Eternal Infinite. O! there is something in the sick bed, and the aching heart, and the restlessness and the languor of shattered health, and the sorrow of affections withered, and the stream of life poisoned at its fountain, and the cold, lonely feeling of utter rawness of the heart which is felt when God strikes home in earnest, that forces a man to feel what is real and what is not.

This is the blessing of affliction to those who will lie still, and not struggle in a cowardly or a resentful way.

It is God speaking to Job out of the whirlwi
saying — In the sunshine and the warmth you
meet Me; but in the hurricane and the darknes
wave after wave has swept down and across th
you shall see My Form, and hear My Voice, and
that your Redeemer liveth.

XI.

[Preached December 6, 1849.]

FIRST ADVENT LECTURE.

THE GRECIAN.

Rom. i. 14–17. — "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

THE season of Advent commemorates three facts. 1. That the Lord has come. 2. That He is perpetually coming. 3. That He will yet come in greater glory than has yet appeared. And these are the three Advents: — The first in the flesh, which is past; the second in the spirit; the third, His judgment Advent.

The first occupies our attention in these lectures.

We live surrounded by Christian institutions; breathe an atmosphere saturated by Christianity. It is exceedingly difficult even to imagine another state of things. In domestic purity, to conceive the debasing effects of polygamy; in the midst of political liberty, to conceive of the blighting power of slavery; in scientific

progress, to imagine mental stagnation; in religious liberty and free goodness, to fancy the reign of superstition.

Yet, to realize the blessings of health, we must sit by the sick bed; to feel what light is, we must descend into the mine and see the emaciated forms which dwindle in darkness; to know what sunshine is, go down into the valleys where stunted vegetation and dim vapors tell of a scene on which the sun scarcely shines two hours in the day. And to know what we have from Christianity, it is well to cast the eyes sometimes over the darkness from which the Advent of Christ redeemed us.

There are four departments of human nature spoken of in these verses, on which the Light shined. The apostle felt that the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation to the Greeks, the Romans, the Barbarians, and the Jews. In the present lecture we consider Christianity presented to the Grecian character, and superseding the Grecian religion.

Four characteristics marked Grecian life and Grecian religion. Restlessness — Worldliness — The worship of the Beautiful — The worship of the Human.

I. Restlessness.

Polytheism divided the contemplation over many objects; and as the outward objects were manifold, so was there a want of unity in the inward life. The Grecian mind was distracted by variety. He was to obtain wisdom from one Deity; eloquence from that Mercurius, for whom Paul was taken; purity from Diana, for whom Ephesus was zealous; protection for

his family or country from the respective tutelary deities; success by a prayer to Fortune.

Hence, dissipation of mind — that fickleness for which the Greeks were famous; and the restless love of novelty, which made Athens a place of literary and social gossip — "some new thing."

All stability of character rests on the contemplation of changeless unity.

So, in modern science, which is eminently Christian, having exchanged the bold theorizing of ancient times for the patient, humble willingness to be taught by the facts of nature, and performing its wonders by exact imitation of them — on the Christian principle — the Son of Man can do nothing of himself, but what He seeth the Father do.

And all the results of science have been to simplify and trace back the manifold to unity. Ancient science was only a number of insulated facts and discordant laws: modern science has gradually ranged these under fewer and ever fewer laws. It is ever tending towards unity of law.

For example — Gravitation. The planet's motion, and the motion of the atom of water that dashes tumultuously, and as it seems lawlessly, down the foam of the cataract, — the floating of the cork, the sinking of the stone, the rise of the balloon, and the curved flight of the arrow, — are all brought under one single law, diverse and opposite as they seem.

Hence, science is calm and dignified, reposing upon uniform fact. The philosopher's very look tells of repose, resting, as he does, on a few changeless principles.

So, also, in religion. Christianity proclaimed "One

God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Observe the effect in the case of two apostles. St. Paul's view of the Gospel contemplated it as an eternal divine purpose. *His* Gospel, the salvation of the Gentiles, was the eternal purpose which had been hidden from ages and generations. His own personal election was part of an eternal counsel. All the children of God had been predestinated before the creation "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." Now, see the effect on character. First, on veracity — 2 Cor. i. 18, &c. He contemplated the changeless "yea" of God — His own yea became fixed as God's — changeless, and calmly unalterable.

Again, in orthodoxy — "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Be not carried about by divers and strange doctrines. Truth is one — Error manifold — many opinions, yet there can be but one faith. See how calm and full of rest all this spirit is.

Now, consider St. John. His view of the Gospel recognized it rather as the manifestation of love than the carrying out of unity of an everlasting purpose. If you view the world as the Greek did, all is so various that you must either refer it to various deities, or to different moods of the same Deity. To-day you are happy — God is pleased; to-morrow, miserable — God is angry. But St. John referred these all to unity of character — "God is Love." Pain and pleasure, the sigh and smile, the sunshine and the storm, nay, hell itself, to him were but the results of Eternal love.

Hence came deep calm — the repose which we are toiling all our lives to find, and which the Greek never found.

II. Worldliness.

There are men and nations to whom this world seems given as their province, as if they had no aspiration above it. If ever there were a nation who understood the science of living, it was the Grecian. They had organized social and domestic life — filled existence with comforts: knew how to extract from everything its greatest measure of enjoyment. This world was their home — this visible world was the object of their worship. Not like the Orientals, who called all materialism bad, and whose highest object was to escape from it; "to be unclothed, not clothed upon," as St. Paul phrases it. The Greek looked upon this world in its fallen state, and pronounced it all "very good."

The results were three-fold.

1. Disappointment. Lying on the infinite bosom of nature, the Greek was yet unsatisfied. And there is an insatiable desire above all external forms and objects in man — all men — which they can never satisfy. Hence his craving too, like others, was, from time to time, "Who will show us any good?" This dissatisfaction is exhibited in the parable of the prodigal, who is but the symbol of erring humanity. Away from his father's home, the famine came, and he fed on husks. Famine and husks are the world's unsatisfactoriness. A husk is a thing that seems full — is hollow — which stays the appetite for a time, but will not support the life. And such is this world: leaving a hollowness at heart, staying our craving but for a time. "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again." And the worldly man is trying to satiate his immortal hunger upon husks.

Second result—Degradation. Religion aims at an ideal above this actual one,—to found a divine polity, a kingdom of God, a church of the best. And the life of worldliness pronounces this world to be all. This is to be adorned and beautified. Life as it is. Had you asked the Greek his highest wish, he would have replied, "This world, if it could only last—I ask no more." Immortal youth—and this bright existence. This is to feed on husks; but "husks which the swine did eat." No degradation to the swine, for it is their nature; but degradation to man to rest in the outward, visible, and present, for the bosom of God is his home. The Greek, therefore, might be, in his own language, "a reasoning animal," but not one of the children of Heaven.

Third result—Disbelief in Immortality. The more the Greek attached himself to this world, the more the world unseen became a dim world of shades. The earlier traditions of the deep-thinking orientals, which his forefathers brought from Asia, died slowly away, and any one who reminded him of them was received as one would now be who were to speak of purgatory. The cultivated Athenians were for the most part sceptics in the time of Christ. Accordingly, when Paul preached at Athens the resurrection of the dead, they "mocked."

This bright world was all. Its revels, its dances, its theatrical exhibitions, its races, its baths, and academic groves, where literary leisure luxuriated,—these were blessedness; and the Greek's hell was death. Their poets speak pathetically of the misery of the wrench from all that is dear and bright. The dreadfulness of

death is one of the most remarkable things that meet us in those ancient writings.

And these men were startled by seeing a new sect rise up to whom death was nothing—who almost courted it. They heard an apostle say at Miletus, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy." For the cross of Christ had crucified in their hearts the Grecian's world. To them life was honor, integrity, truth; that is, the soul. To this all other was to be sacrificed. This was the proper self, which could only die by sin, by denying its own existence. The rise of the higher life had made this life nothing, and delivered those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject unto bondage.

Appeal to the worldly-minded. Melancholy spectacle! Men and women shutting out the idea of death,—the courtesies of society concealing from them the mention of their age, by all false appliances of dress, &c. &c., and staying the appearance of the hand of time. You must die. The day will come, and the coffin. Life in God alone robs that thought of dreadfulness:—when, the resurrection being begun within, You can look upon the decay of the outward man, and feel *I* am not dying.

III. The worship of the Beautiful.

The Greek saw this world almost only on its side of beauty. His name for it was Kosmos, divine order, or regularity. He looked at actions in the same way. One and the same adjective expressed the noble and the beautiful. If he wanted to express a perfect man, he called him a musical or harmonious man.

What was the consequence? Religion degenerated into the arts. All the immortal powers of man were thrown upon the production of a work of the imagination. The artist who had achieved a beautiful statue was almost worshipped. The poet who had produced a noble poem was the prophet of the nation. The man who gave the richest strains of melody was half divine. This was their inspiration. The arts became religion, and religion ended in the arts.

Hence, necessarily, sensuality became religious; because all feelings produced by these arts, chiefly the voluptuous ones, were authorized by religion. There is a peculiar danger in refinement of sensuous enjoyments. Coarse pleasures disgust, and pass for what they are; but who does not know that the real danger and triumph of voluptuousness are when it approaches the soul veiled under the drapery of elegance? They fancied themselves above the gross multitude; but their sensuality, disguised even from themselves, was sensuality still,—ay, and even at times, in certain festivals, broke out into gross and unmistakable licentiousness.

And hence, the greatest of the Greeks, in his imaginary Republic, banished from that perfect state all the strains which were soft and enfeebling; all the poems that represented any deeds of Deities unworthy of the Divine; all the statues which could suggest one single feeling of impurity. Himself a worshipper of the purest beautiful, it was yet given to his all but inspired heart to detect the lurking danger before which Greece was destined to fall,—the approach of sensuality through the worship of the graceful and the refined.

There is this danger now. Men are awakened from coarse, rude life to the desire of something deeper. And the God or Spirit of this world can subtly turn that aside into channels which shall effectually enfeeble and ruin the soul. Refinement, melting imagery, dim religious light, all the witchery of form and color, music, architecture,—all these, even colored with the hues of religion, producing feelings either religious or quasi-religious, may yet do the world's work. For all attempt to impress the heart through the senses, "to make perfect through the flesh," is fraught with that danger beneath which Greece sunk. There is a self-deception in those feelings. The thrill, and the sense of mystery, and the luxury of contemplation, and the impressions on the senses,—all these lie very close to voluptuousness, enfeeblement of heart, — yea, even impurity.

This, too, is the ruinous effect of an education of accomplishments. The education of the taste and the cultivation of the feelings in undue proportion destroys the masculine tone of mind. An education chiefly romantic or poetical, not balanced by hard practical life, is simply the ruin of the soul.

If any one ever felt the beauty of this world, it was he. The beauty of the lily nestling in the grass — he felt it all; but the Beauty which he exhibited in life was the stern loveliness of moral action. The king in his Beauty "had no form nor comeliness:" it was the beauty of obedience, of noble deeds, of unconquerable fidelity, of unswerving truth, of Divine self-devotion. The Cross! the Cross! We must have something of iron and hardness in our characters. The Cross tells us what is the true Beautiful which is

Divine: an inward, not an outward beauty, whicl rejects and turns sternly away from the meretricious forms of the outward world, which have a corrupting or debilitating tendency.

IV. The worship of Humanity.

The Greek had strong human feelings and sympa thies. He projected his own self on nature; humanized it; gave a human feeling to clouds, forests, rivers seas.

In this he was a step above other idolatries. Th Hindoo, for instance, worshipped monstrous emblem of physical power. Might, gigantic masses, hu dred-handed deities, scarcely human, you find in Hi dostan. In Egypt, again, Life was the thing sacre Hence all that had life was in a way divine: the sacre ibis, crocodile, bull, cat, snake—all that produced ar all that ended life. Hence, death, too, was sacre The Egyptian lived in the contemplation of deat His coffin was made in his lifetime; his ancesto embalmed; the sacred animals preserved in myrie heaps, through generations, in mummy-pits. Th sovereign's tomb was built to last for, not centurie but thousands of years.

The Greek was above this. It was not mere power, but human power; not merely beauty, bu human beauty; not merely life, but human life, whic was the object of his profoundest veneration. H effort therefore was, in his conception of his go to realize a beautiful human being. And not th animal beauty of the human only, but the intelligenc which informs and shines through beauty. All h life he was moulding into shape visions of earth,—

glorious human being. Light, under the conditions of humanity, the "sun in human limbs arrayed," was the central object of Grecian worship. Much in this had a germ of truth—more was false. This principle, which is true, was evidently stated—the Divine, under the limitations of humanity, is the only worship of which man is capable. Demonstrably: for man cannot conceive that which is not in his own mind. He may worship what is below himself, or that which is in himself resembling God; but attributes of which from his own nature he has no conception, he clearly cannot adore.

The only question therefore is *what* he shall reckon divine, and in alliance with God? If power, then he worships as the Hindoo; if life, then as the Egyptian; if physical and intellectual beauty, then as the Greek.

Observe—they wanted some living image of God, containing something more truly divine, to supplant their own. For still, in spite of their versatile and multifarious conceptions, the illimitable Unknown remained, to which an altar stood in Athens. They wanted humanity in its glory; they asked for a Son of Man.

Christ is Deity under the limitations of humanity. But there is presented in Christ for worship, not power, nor beauty, nor physical life, but the moral image of God's perfections. Through the heart, and mind, and character of Jesus, it was the Divinest streamed. Divine *character*—that was given in Christ to worship.

Another error: the Greek worshipped *all* that was in man. Every feeling had its beauty and its divine origin. Hence Thieving had its patron deity; and

Treachery, and Cunning; and Lust had its temple erected for abominable worship. All that was human had its sanction in the example of some god.

Christ corrects. Not all that is human is divine There is a part of our nature kindred with God; the strengthening of that, by mixture with God's Spirit is our true and proper humanity — regeneration of soul. There is another part, whereby we are related to the brutes — our animal propensities, our lower inclinations, our corrupted will; and whoever lives in that, and strengthens that, sinks not to the level of the brutes, but below them, to the level of the demons for he uses an immortal spirit to degrade himself; and the immortal joined with evil, as the life to the body, is demoniacal.

In conclusion, remark: In all this system one thing was wanting — the sense of sin. The Greek worshipped the beautiful, adored the human, deified the world; of course, in this worship found no place for sin. The Greek would not have spoken to you of sin; he would have told you of departure from right line — want of moral harmony — discord within he would have said that the music of your soul was out of tune. Christ came to convince the world of sin. And after Him that deep cloud began to brood upon the hearts of Christendom, which rests upon the conscience which has been called into vitality of action and susceptibility.

For this Greece had no remedy. The universe has no remedy but one. There is no prescription for the sickness of the heart, but that which is written in the Redeemer's blood.

XII.

(Preached December 13, 1849.)

SECOND ADVENT LECTURE.

THE ROMAN.

Romans i. 14—16. — "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

THE Advent of Christ is the gulf which separates ancient from modern history. The dates B. C. and A. D. are not arbitrary but real division. His coming is the crisis of the world's history. It was the moment from whence light streamed into the realms of darkness, and life descended into the regions of the grave. It was the new birth of worn-out humanity.

Last Thursday we considered the effects of this Advent on Greece. We found the central principle of Grecian life to be worldliness. The Greek saw, sought, and worshipped, nothing higher than this life, but only this life itself. Hence Greek religion degenerated into mere Taste, which is perception of the Beautiful. The result on character was threefold: — Restlessness, which sent the Greek through

this world with his great human heart unsatisfie fickle in disposition, and ever inquiring, with insati ble curiosity, after some new thing. Licentiousnes for whoever attaches his heart to the outward Beaut without worshipping chiefly in it that moral Beaut of which all else is but the type and suggestio necessarily, slowly it may be, but inevitably, sink down and down into the deepest abyss of sensu existence. Lastly, Unbelief. The Greek, seeing pri cipally this world, lost his hold upon the next. Fo the law of faith is, that a man can only believe what already in his spirit. He believes as he is. The Apo tle Paul writes in astonishment to these Greeks (o Corinth), "How say some among you there is n resurrection of the dead?" But the thing was exp cable. Paul was "dying daily." The outward li decayed: the inner grew and lived with more vitalit every day. He *felt* the life to come in which h believed. But the Corinthians, leading an easy, lu urious life, how could it be a reality to them? Ho could they believe in immortality, in whom the immo tal scarcely stirred, or only feebly?

To these the apostle felt bound to preach the livin Gospel. "I am debtor to the Greeks."

To-day, we turn to the Roman nation, its religio and its life. At the time of which the New Te tament speaks, Greece had been nearly a centu and a half a province of Rome. In the language o Daniel, the kingdom of brass had given way to th kingdom of iron. The physical might of Rome ha subdued Greece; but the mind of Greece had ma tered Rome. The Greeks became the teachers of the conquerors. The deities of Greece were incorporate

into the national faith of Rome. Greek literature became the education of the Roman youth. Greek philosophy was almost the only philosophy the Roman knew. Rome adopted Grecian arts, and was insensibly moulded by contact with Grecian life. So that the world in name and government was Roman, but in feeling and civilization Greek.

If, therefore, we would understand Roman life, we must contemplate it at an earlier period, when it was free from Greek influence, and purely exhibited its own idiosyncrasies.

The nation which we contemplate to-day was a noble one; humanly, one of the noblest that the world has seen. Next to the Jewish, the very highest. We may judge from the fact of St. Paul's twice claiming his Roman citizenship, and feeling the indignation of a Roman citizen at the indignity of chastisement. And this, too, in an age when the name had lost its brightness; when a luxurious, wealthy Greek could purchase his freedom. Claudius Lysias bought it "with a large sum of money." And yet we may conceive what it had been once, when even the faint lustre of its earlier dignity could inspire a foreigner, and that foreigner a Jew, and that Jew a Christian, with such respect.

At the outset, then, we have a rare and high-minded people and their life to think of. They who have imbibed the spirit of its writers from their youth can neither speak nor think of it without enthusiasm. Scarcely can we forbear it even in the pulpit. Nor is this an unchristian feeling, earthly, to be checked; for, in order to elevate Christianity, it is not necessary

to vilify heathenism. To exalt revelation, we need not try to show that natural religion has no truths To exhibit the blessings of the Advent, it is not needful to demonstrate that man was brutalized without it It is a poor, cowardly system which can only rise by the degradation of all others. Whatever is true belongs to the kingdom of the Truth. The purer the creed, the higher the character; the nobler the men who without revelation signally failed at last, the more absolute is the necessity of a Redeemer, and the more are we constrained to refer gratefully all blessings to His advent.

We take three points: — The public and private life of Rome, and its moral and inevitable decay at last.

I. The public life of Rome.

First, I notice the spirit of its religion. The very word shows what that was. *Religion*, a Roman word means obligation, a binding power. Very different from the corresponding Greek expression, which implies worship by a sensuous ceremonial (threskeia).

The Roman began, like the Jew, from Law. He started from the idea of Duty. But there was an important difference. The Jew was taught duty or obedience to the Law of a personal, holy God. The Roman obeyed, as his Etruscan ancestors taught him a Fate or Will; and with very different results. But at present we only observe the lofty character of the early religion which resulted from such a starting point.

The early history of Rome is wrapped in fable but the fable itself is worth much, as preserving the

spirit of the old life when it does not preserve the facts. Accordingly, the tradition taught that the building of Rome was done in obedience to the intimations of the Will of Heaven. It was rebuilt in a site selected not by human prudence, but a voice divinely guided Its first great legislator (Numa) is represented as giving laws, not from a human heart, but after secret communion with the Superhuman. It was the belief of Roman writers that the early faith taught access to God only through the mind; that, therefore, no images, but only temples, were found in Rome during the first two centuries of her existence. No bloody sacrifices defiled the city. War itself was a religious act, solemnly declared by a minister of religion casting a spear into the enemy's territory. Nay, we even find something in spirit resembling the Jewish Sabbath — the command that during the rites of religion no traffic should go on, nor workman's hammer break the consecrated silence, but that men should devoutly contemplate God.

Here was a high, earnest, severe Religion.

Now, this resulted in Government, as its highest earthly expression. Duty: and therefore Law on earth, as a copy of the Will of Heaven. Different nations seem, consciously or unconsciously, destined by God to achieve different missions. The Jew had the highest: to reveal to the world Holiness. The Oriental stands as a witness to the reality of the invisible above the visible. The Greek reminded the world of Eternal Beauty; and the destiny of the Roman seems to have been to stamp upon the minds of mankind the ideas of Law, Government, Order.

Beauty was not the object of the Roman contem-

plation nor worship: nor was harmony. The taste for them might be taught, superinduced: but it was not natural. It was not indigenous to the soil of his nature. Hence, when Greece was reduced to a Roman province, in 146 B. C., the Roman soldiers took the noblest specimens of Grecian painting and converted them into gambling-tables.

You may distinguish the difference of the two characters from the relics which they have left behind them. The Greek produced a statue or a temple, the expression of a sentiment. The Roman, standing upon visible Fact, dealing with the practical, and living in the actual life of men, has left behind him works of public usefulness: noble roads which intersect empires, mighty aqueducts, bridges, enormous excavations for draining cities, at which we stand astonished; and, above all, that system of Law, the slow result of ages of experience, which has so largely entered into the modern jurisprudence of most European nations.

One of their own writers has distinctly recognized this destiny (Virgil). "It is for others to work brass into breathing shape: others may be more eloquent or describe the circling movements of the heavens and tell the rising of the stars. Thy work, O Roman, is to rule the nations: these be thine arts: to impose the conditions of the world's peace, to show mercy to the fallen, and to crush the proud."

In accordance with this, it is a characteristic fact that we find the *institutions* of Rome referred to inspiration. Not a decalogue of private duties, but a code of municipal laws. And, turning to the page of Scripture, whenever the Roman comes prominently forward

we always find him the organ of law, the instrument of public rule and order. Pilate has no idea of condemning unjustly: "Why, what evil hath He done?" But he yields at the mention of the source of Law, the Emperor. The Apostle Paul appeals to Cæsar; and even a corrupt Festus respects the appeal: "Unto Cæsar thou shalt go." Nor could even the prisoner's innocence reverse his own appeal: "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar." The tumult at Ephesus is stilled by a hint of Roman interference: "We are in danger of being called in question for this day's uproar." When the angry crowd at Athens, and the equally angry mob of the Sanhedrim, was about to destroy Paul, again the Roman comes,—Claudius Lysias, "with an army, and rescues him."

It was always the same thing. The Roman seems almost to have existed to exhibit on earth a copy of the Divine order of the universe, the law of the heavenly hierarchies.

II. Private Life.

We observe the sanctity of the domestic ties. Very touching are all the well-known anecdotes. That, for instance, of the noble Roman matron, who felt, all spotless as she was, life-dishonored, and died by her own hand. The sacredness of Home was expressed strongly by the idea of two guardian deities (Lares and Penates) who watched over it. A Roman's own fireside and hearthstone were almost the most sacred spots on earth. There was no battle-cry that came so to his heart as that, "For the altar and the hearth." How firmly this was rooted in the nation's

heart is plain from the tradition that for one hundred and seventy years no separation took place by law between those who had been united in wedlock.

There is deep importance in this remark: for it was to this that Rome owed her greatness. The whole fabric of the Commonwealth rose out of the Family. The Family was the nucleus round which all the rest agglomerated. First, the Family; then the clan, made up of the family and its dependents or clients; then the tribe; lastly, the nation. And so the noble structure of the Roman Commonwealth arose, compacted and mortised together, but resting on the foundation of the hearthstone.

Very different is it in the East. A nation is a collection of units, held together by a government. There is a principle of cohesion in them; but only such cohesion as belongs to the column of sand, supported by the whirlwind: when the blast ceases, the atoms fall asunder. When the chief is slain or murdered, the nation is in anarchy — the family does not exist. Polygamy and infanticide, the bane of domestic life, are the destruction, too, of national existence.

There is a solemn lesson in this. Moral decay in the family is the invariable prelude to public corruption. It is a false distinction which we make between public integrity and private honor. The man whom you cannot admit into your family, whose morals are corrupt, cannot be a pure statesman. Whoever studies history will be profoundly convinced that a nation stands or falls with the sanctity of its domestic ties. Rome mixed with Greece, and learned her mor-

The Goth was at her gates; but she fell not till she was corrupt and tainted at the heart. The domestic corruption preceded the political. When there was no longer purity on her hearthstone, nor integrity in her senate, then, and not till then, her death-knell was rung.

We will bless God for our English homes. Partly the result of our religion. Partly the result of the climate which God has given us, according to the law of compensation by which physical evil is repaid by moral blessing; so that, its gloom and darkness making life more necessarily spent within doors than it is among continental nations, our life is domestic and theirs is social. When England shall learn domestic maxims from strangers, as Rome from Greece, her ruin is accomplished. And this blessing, too, comes from Christ, who presided at the marriage feast at Cana, who found a home in the family of Nazareth, and consecrated the hearthstone with everlasting inviolability.

Let us break up this private life into particulars.

1. We find manly courage. This, too, is preserved in a word. Virtue is a Roman word — manhood, courage; for courage, manhood, virtue, were one word. Words are fossil thoughts. You trace the ancient feeling in that word; you trace it, too, in the corruption of the word. Among the degenerate descendants of the Romans, *virtue* no longer means manhood; it is simply dilettantism. The decay of life exhibits itself in the debasement even of words.

We dwell on this courage, because it was not merely animal daring. Like everything Roman, it was connected with religion. It was duty — obedi-

ence to will — self-surrender to the public good. The Roman legions subdued the world; but it was not their discipline alone, nor their strength, nor their brute daring. It was rather, far, their moral force. A nation whose legendary and historical heroes could thrust their hand into the flame, and see it consumed without a nerve shrinking; or come from captivity on parole, advise their countrymen against peace, and then go back to torture and certain death; or devote themselves by solemn self-sacrifice (like the Decii); who could bid sublime defiance to pain, and count dishonor the only evil: — the world must bow before such men; for, unconsciously, here was a form of the spirit of the Cross, — self-surrender, unconquerable fidelity to duty, sacrifice for others. And so far as Rome had in her that spirit, and so long as she had it, her career was the career of all those who, in any form, even the lowest, take up the Cross: she went forth conquering and to conquer.

2. Deep as Roman greatness was rooted in the courage of her men, it was rooted deeper still in the honor of her women. I take one significant fact, which exhibits national feeling. There was a fire in Rome called Eternal, forever replenished. It was the type and symbol of the duration of the Republic. This fire was tended by the Vestals: a beautifully significant institution. It implied that the duration of Rome was coëxtensive with the preservation of her purity of morals. So long as the dignity of her matrons and her virgins remained unsullied, so long she would last — no longer. Female chastity guarded the Eternal City.

Here we observe something anticipative of Chris-

tianity. In the earlier ages after the Advent there were divine honors paid to the Queen of Heaven; and the land was covered over with houses set apart for celibacy. Of course, rude and gross minds can find plenty to sneer at in that institution; and doubtless the form of the truth was mistaken enough, as all mere forms of doctrine are. But the heart of truth which lay beneath all that superstition was a precious one. It was this: So long as purity of heart, delicacy of feeling, chastity of life, are found in a nation, so long that nation is great — no longer. Personal purity is the divinest thing in man and woman. It is the most sacred truth which the church of Christ is commissioned to exhibit and proclaim.

Upon these virtues I observe: — The Roman was conspicuous for the virtues of this earth, — honor, fidelity, courage, chastity, all manliness; yet the apostle felt that he had a gospel to preach to them that were in Rome also. Moral virtues are not religious graces. There are two classes of excellence. There are men whose lives are full of moral principle, and there are others whose feelings are strongly devotional. And, strange to say, each of these is found at times disjoined from the other. Men of almost spotless earthly honor, who scarcely seem to know what reverence for things heavenly and devout aspirations towards God mean. Men who have religious instinct pray with fervor, kindle with spiritual raptures, and yet are impure in their feelings, and fail in matters of common truth and honesty. Each of these is but half a man — dwarfed and stunted in his spiritual growth. The "perfect man in Christ Jesus," who has grown to the "measure of the stat-

ure of the fulness of Christ," is he who has united these two things; who to the high Roman virtues which adorn this earth has added the sublimer feelings which are the investiture of heaven; in whom "justice, mercy, truth," are but the body of which the soul is faith and love.

Yet, observe, these are moral virtues, and morality is not religion. Still, beware of depreciating them. Beware of talking contemptuously of "mere morality." If we must choose between two things which ought never to be divided, moral principle and religious sentiment, there is no question which most constitutes the character "which is not far from the kingdom of heaven." Devout feelings are common enough in childhood, — religious emotions, religious warmth, — instances of which are retailed by the happy parent; common enough, too, in grown men and women: but listen — those devout feelings, separate from high principle, do not save from immorality; nay, I do believe, are the very stepping-stone towards it. When the sensual is confounded with and mistaken for the spiritual, and merely devout warmth is the rich, rank soil of heart, in which moral evil most surely and most rankly grows, you will not easily build Roman virtues upon *that*. But high principle, which is, in other words, the baptism of John, is the very basis on which is most naturally raised the superstructure of religious faith. Happy, thrice happy, he who begins with the law and ends with the Gospel.

III. The decline of Roman Life

1. First came corruption of the moral character.

The Roman worldliness was of a kind far higher than the Grecian. In this way the Roman really had the world's good at heart. There was a something invisible at which he aimed — invisible justice, invisible order, invisible right. Still, it was only the law on earth — the well-being of this existence. And whatever is only of this earth is destined to decay. The soul of the Roman, bent on this world's affairs, became secularized, then animalized, and so at last, when there was little left to do, pleasure became his aim, as it had been the Grecian's. Then came ruin swiftly. When the emperors lived for their elaborately contrived life of luxury, — when the Roman soldier left his country's battles to be fought by mercenaries, — the doom of Rome was sealed. Yet, because it was a nobler worldliness, less sensual and less selfish, the struggle with decay was more protracted than in Greece. Lofty spirits rose to stem the tide of corruption; and the death-throes of Rome were long and terrible. She ran a mighty career of a thousand years.

2. Scepticism and superstition went hand in hand. An example of the former we have in Pilate's question, "What is truth?" An example of the latter, in the superstitious belief of the inhabitants of Lystria, that Paul and Barnabas were "Gods come to them in the likeness of men." And this probably was a tolerably accurate picture of the state of Roman feeling. The lower classes sunk in a debased superstition, — the educated classes too intellectual to believe in it, and having nothing better to put in its stead. Or, perhaps, there was also a superstition which is only another name for scepticism: infidelity

trembling at its self — shrinking from its own shadow. There is a fearful question for which the soul must find an answer: the mystery of its own destinies Men looked into their own souls, and, listening, heard only an awful silence there. No response came from the world without. Philosophy had none to give. And then men, terrified at the progress of infidelity, more than half distrusting their own tendencies, took refuge in adding superstition to superstition. They brought in the gods of Greece, and Egypt, and the East: as if multiplying the objects of reverence strengthened the spirit of reverence in the soul; as if every new sacredness was a barrier between them and the dreadful abyss of uncertainty into which they did not dare to look.

This is as true now as then. Superstition is the refuge of a sceptical spirit, which has a heart too devout to dare to be sceptical. Men tremble at new theories, new views, the spread of infidelity; and they think to fortify themselves against these by multiplying the sanctities which they reverence. But all this will not do. Superstition cannot do the work of faith, and give repose or peace. It is not by multiplying ceremonies, — it is not by speaking of holy things low, with bated breath, — it is not by intrenching the soul behind the infallibility of a church, or the infallibility of the words and sentences of a book — it is not by shutting out inquiry, and resenting every investigation as profane, that you can arrest the progress of infidelity. Faith, not superstition, is the remedy. There is a grand Fearlessness in Faith He who in his heart of hearts reverences the Good the True, the Holy, — that is, reverences God, — does

not tremble at the apparent success of attacks upon the outworks of his faith. They may shake those who rested on those outworks — they do not move him whose soul reposes on the Truth itself. He needs no props or crutches to support his faith. He does not need to multiply the objects of his awe, in order to keep dreadful doubt away. Founded on a rock, Faith can afford to gaze undismayed at the approaches of Infidelity.

3. In Rome, religion degenerated into allegiance to the state. In Greece, as it has been truly said, it ended in taste. In Rome, it closed with the worship of the emperor. Nothing shows the contrast between Greek and Roman feeling more strongly than this. In Greece, the poet became the prophet, and the artist was the man divinely inspired. In Rome, the deification of the emperor, as the symbol of government, was the point towards which, unsuspectedly, but by a sure and inevitable consecutiveness, the national feeling for ages had been tending.

And the distinction between the Christian and the Roman tone of feeling is no less strikingly contrasted in the very same allegiance. Sacrament, perhaps, is the highest word of symbolical life in both. It is a Roman word. In Rome it meant an oath of allegiance to the senate and Roman people. Nothing higher the Roman knew. In the Christian church it is also the oath of highest fidelity; but its import there is this: "Here we offer and present unto Thee, *O Lord*, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a lively sacrifice."

In this contrast of the sacramental vows are perceptible the different tendencies of the two starting-

points of revealed religion and Roman, as marked before. Judaism began from law or obligation to a holy person. Roman religion began from obedience to a mere will. Judaism ended in Christianity; whose central principle is joyful surrender to One whose Name is Love. The religion of Rome ended among the nobler, as Cato and the Antonines, in the fatalism of a sublime but loveless Stoicism, whose essential spirit is submission to a Destiny; among the ordinary men, in mere zeal for the state, more or less earthly. It stiffened into Stoicism, or degenerated into public spirit.

4. The last step we notice is the decline of Religion into expediency. It is a startling thing to see men protecting popular superstitions which they despise; taking part, with solemn gravity, in mummeries which in their heart they laugh at. Yet such we are told, was the state of things in Rome. It is a trite and often-quoted observation of a great Roman that one minister of religion could scarcely meet another without a smile upon his countenance, indicating consciousness of a solemn mockery. And an instance of this, I believe, we have in the Acts of the Apostles. The town-clerk or magistrate of Ephesus stilled the populace by a kind of accommodation to their prejudices, much in the same way in which a nurse would soothe a passionate child. Apparently, as we are told, he belonged to the friends of Paul; and we can scarcely forbear a smile at the solemn gravity with which he assures the people that there could be no doubt that the image fell down from Jupiter: no question throughout all Asia and

the world about the greatness of the "great goddess Diana."

For there were cultivated minds which had apprehended some of the truths of Christianity; philosophers who were enlightened far beyond their age. But a line of martyred philosophers had made them cautious. They made a compromise. They enjoyed their own light, kept silence, and left the rest in darkness. The result was destruction of their own moral being; for the law of truth is that it cannot be shut up without becoming a dead thing, and mortifying the whole nature. Not the truth which a man knows, but that which he says and lives, becomes the soul's life. Truth cannot bless except when it is lived for, proclaimed, and suffered for.

This was the plan of the enlightened when the Saviour came. And this is the lowest step of a nation's fall, when the few who know the truth refuse to publish it; when governments patronize superstition as a mere engine for governing; when the ministers of religion only half believe the dogmas which they teach, dare not even say to one another what they feel and what they doubt, dare not be true to their convictions for fear of an Ephesian mob.

Therefore it is necessary that One should come who should be True; the Truest of all that are woman-born; whose life was Truth; who from Everlasting had been The Truth. It was necessary that He should come to preach the Gospel to the poor; to dare to say to the people truths which the philosophers dared not say, and other truths of which no philosopher had dreamed. The penalty of that true Life was the sacrifice which is the world's Atone-

ment. Men saw the Mortal die. But others the Immortal rise to take His place at the right of Power: and the spirit which has been strea out ever since from that Life and Death is the w present Light, and shall be its everlasting Life.

XIII.

[Preached December 20, 1849.]

THIRD ADVENT LECTURE

THE BARBARIAN.

Acts xxviii. 1 7.—"And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita. And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the Barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god. In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously."

Of the four divisions of the world at the time of the Advent, two have already been reviewed. The Greek, seeing the right only on its side of beauty, ended in mere intellectual refinement. The artist took the place of God, and genius stood for inspiration. The Roman's destiny was different. His was not the kingdom of burnished brass, but the kingdom of iron. He set out with the great idea of Duty and Law:

exhibited in consequence the austere simplicity of pure domestic life: in public affairs, government and Order, stamping upon the world the great idea of Obedience to Law. In the decline of Rome the results of this were manifest. After a mighty career of a thousand years, Rome had run out her course. Among the loftier minds who stood out protesting against her corruption, and daring in a corrupted age to believe in the superiority of Right to enjoyment, grand contempt for pleasure, sublime defiances of pain, told out the dying agonies of the iron kingdom, worthy of the heart of steel which beat beneath the Roman's robe. This was Stoicism: the Grecian philosophy which took deepest root, as might have been expected, in the soil of Roman thought. Stoicism was submission to a destiny,—hard, rigid, loveless submission. Its language was Must—It must be; and man's highest manliness is to submit to the inevitable. It is right because it must be so. Besides these higher ones, there were others who carried out the idea of Duty in quite another direction. With the mass of the nation, reverence for Law passed into homage to the symbol of Law—loyalty to the government; its highest expression being the sacramental homage to the nation's authority. So that, as I have already said, the Roman spirit stiffened into stoicism, and degenerated into worship of the emperor. This was not accidental; it was the inevitable result of the Idea. It might have taken half the time—or ten times as long; but at last the germ must have ripened into that fruit, and no other. The Roman began with obedience to Will.

Law, meaning obedience to a holy God, passes by a

natural transition into the Gospel; that is, reverential duty to a person becomes the obedience of love, at last, which obeys because the beautifulness of obedience is perceived. The Jew began in severity: ended in rigidity, or else relaxation. To him the Advent came proclaiming the Lord of Love instead of the coercive necessity of a lifeless fate.

To the Greek worshipper of beauty, the Advent came with an announcement of an inner beauty. He who was to them, and all such, "a Root out of a dry ground, with no form or comeliness," with nothing to captivate a refined taste, or gratify an elegant sensibility, lived a life which was divine and beautiful. His religion, as contrasted with the Grecian, supplementing it, and confirming in it what was true, "was the worship of the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness."

The third department is the necessity of the Advent for the *Barbarian* world.

By Barbarian was meant any religion but the Roman or the Greek,—a contemptuous term, the spirit of which is common enough in all ages. Just as now every narrow sect monopolizes God, claims for itself an exclusive heaven, contemptuously looks on all the rest of mankind as sitting in outer darkness, and complacently consigns myriads whom God has made to His uncovenanted mercies,—that is, to probable destruction,—so, in ancient times, the Jew scornfully designated all nations but his own as Gentiles; and the Roman and Greek, each retaliating in his way, treated all nations but his own under the common epithet of Barbarians.

We shall confine ourselves to-day to a single case of Barbarian life. We shall not enter into the reli

gion of our own ancestors, the Celts and Teutonic nations who were Barbarians then; nor that of the Scythians or the Africans. One instance will be sufficient.

Twice in his recorded history, St. Paul came in contact with Barbarians; twice he was counted as a god. Once among the semi-barbarians of Lycaonia, at Lystra,—once here, at Melita.

There is a little uncertainty about the identification of this Melita. It was a name shared by two islands —Malta, and Melida in the Adriatic. But it seems to be established beyond all reasonable doubt that it was on Malta, not on Melida, that St. Paul was wrecked. The chief objection to this view is, that immediately before the wreck we are told — chap. xxvii. 27 — that they were "driven up and down in Adria." But this is satisfactorily anwered by the fact, that the name Adriatic was applied often loosely to all the sea round Sicily. Two great arguments in favor of Malta then remain: after leaving the island, the apostle touched at Syracuse, and so went on to Rhegium and Puteoli. This is the natural direction from Malta to Rome, but not from Melida. Then, besides, "barbarians" will not apply to the inhabitants of Melida. They were Greeks: whereas the natives of Malta, living under Roman government, were originally Carthaginians, who had been themselves a Phœnician colony. The epithet is perfectly correct as applied to them.

It is the Carthaginian or Phœnician religion, then, which moulded the barbarian life, that we examine today. We take three points.

I. Barbarian virtues.

II. Barbarian idea of retribution.

VII. Barbarian conception of Deity.

I. Barbarian virtues.

Two errors have been held on the subject of natural goodness. The first, that of those who deny to fallen man any goodness at all, and refuse to admit even kindness of feeling. In the language of a celebrated and popular expounder of this view, "man in his natural state is one half beast and one half devil." This is the effect of a system. No man in his heart believes that. No mother ever gazed upon her child, baptized or unbaptized, and thought so. Men are better than their creed. Their hearts are more than a match for their false theological system. Beneath the black skin of the African there runs a blood as warm as that which is in the blue veins of the Christian. Among the civilized heathen, the instinctive feelings are as kindly and as exquisitely delicate as they were ever found in the bosom of the baptized. Accordingly, we find here those natural barbarian virtues of hospitality and sympathy. The shipwrecked mariners, wet and cold, were received in Melita with a warm, compassionate welcome. The people of the island did not *say*, "Depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled." They gave them those things which were necessary for the body. And a Christian, contemplating this, gave this distinct testimony, "The barbarous people showed us no little kindness."

The second error is the opposite one of placing too high a value on these natural virtues. There is a class of writers who talk much of early unsophisticated times. They tell of the days "when wild in woods the noble savage ran." They speak of pastoral sim-

plicity, and the reverence and piety of mountain-life. According to them, civilization is the great corrupter. But the truth is, the natural good feelings of human nature are only instincts: no more moral than a long sight or a delicate sense of hearing. The keen feelings of the child are no guarantee of future principle: perhaps rather the reverse. The profuse hospitality of the mountaineer, who rarely sees strangers, and to whom gold is little worth, becomes shrewd and selfish calculation so soon as temptation from passing traffic is placed in his way. You may travel among savages who treat you, as a stranger, with courtesy; but ye feed on the flesh of their enemies. And these Melitans who "showed no little kindness" to the wrecked crew belonged to a stock who, in the most civilized days of Carthage, offered human sacrifice, and after every successful battle with the Romans burnt the chief prisoners alive as a thank-offering to heaven. If we trace them still further back, we find their Phœnician ancestors in the Old Testament tainted with the same practice, and the Hebrews themselves imbibing it from them, so as to be perpetually arraigned by their prophets on the charge of making their sons and daughters "pass through the fire to Baal." They could be kind to strangers; and cruel to enemies.

The Advent of Christ brought a new spirit into the world. "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." That was not the new part. The Miletans would have not disagreed with that .... "As I have loved you, that ye love one another." As I have loved you .... that makes all new. So also 1 John ii. 7, 8. The "old commandment" was old enough. Barbarians felt in their hearts. But the

same commandment with "true light" shining on it was different indeed.

"Love your neighbor, hate your enemy." Carthaginians obeyed that. Hear the Law of Love expounded by Himself, Matt. v. 43, 44 — "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. For if ye love them which love you, what do ye more than others? Do not even . . . . (the barbarians) . . . . the same?"

This is Christianity: that is, the Mind of Christ.

Remark, too, the principle on which this is taught. Matt. v. 45 — "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Not upon merely personal authority; not by a law graven on stone, nor even printed in a book, to be referred to chapter and verse; but on the principle of the imitation of God. His heart interpreted the universe: He read its "open secret," which is open to all who have the heart to feel it, secret to all others. A secret, according to Him, to be gathered from the rain as it fell on the just and the unjust, from the dew of heaven, from the lily, and from the fowls of the air, from the wheat, from every law and every atom. This was His Revelation. He revealed God. He spelled for us the meaning of all this perplexing unintelligible world. He proclaimed its hidden meaning to be Love. So He converted rude barbarian instincts into Christian graces, by expanding their sphere and purifying them of selfishness — causing them to be regulated by principle, and

elevating them into a conscious imitation of God in His revealed character.

II. The Barbarian idea of retribution.

The Apostle Paul was one of those who are formed to be the leaders of the world. Foremost in persecution — foremost in Christianity ("nothing behind the chiefest apostles") — foremost in the shipwreck, his voice the calmest, his heart the stoutest, his advice the wisest in the tumult. Foremost, too, when all was over, not as a prisoner, but actively engaged for the general good, it is Paul who is gathering the sticks to make the fire. From those sticks a viper sprung and fastened on his hand, and the first impression of the Barbarians was, "No doubt this man is a murderer whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live."

This is the very basis of all natural religion: the idea of the connection between guilt and retribution. In some form or other it underlies all mythologies. The sleepless, never-dying avengers of wrong; the Nemesis who presides over retribution; the vengeance which suffereth not the murderer to live; the whips and scorpions of the Furies — it seems the first instinct of religion.

In the barbarian conception of it, however, there was something gross, corporeal, and dangerous.

Because they misinterpreted natural laws into vengeance. Yet there is a proneness in man to judge so. We expect that nature will execute the chastisements of the spiritual world. Hence, all nature becomes to the imagination leagued against the transgressor. The stars in their courses fight against Sisera. The wall of

Sloam falls on guilty men. The sea will not carry the criminal, nor the plank bear him; the viper stings; everything is a minister of wrath. On this conviction nations constructed their trial by ordeal. The guilty man's sword would fail in the duel, and the foot would strike and be burnt by the hot ploughshare. Some idea of this sort lurks in all our minds. We picture to ourselves the spectres of the past haunting the nightly bed of the tyrant. We take for granted that there is an avenger making life miserable.

But experience corrects all this. The tyrant's sleep is as sweet and sound often as the infant's. The sea will wreck an apostle, and bear a murderer triumphantly. The viper stings the innocent turf-cutter. The fang of evil pierces the heel of the noblest as he treads it down. It is the poetry of man's heart, not the reality of the universe, which speaks of the Vengeance which pursues guilt with unrelenting steps to slay. Only in poetry is this form of justice found. Only in poetry does the fire refuse to burn the innocent. Only in poetry can Purity lay her hand on the fawning lion's mane. If we ask where these Melitans got their idea of Retribution, the reply is, out of their own hearts. They felt the eternal connection between wrong-doing and penalty. The penalty they would have executed on murder was death. They naturally threw this idea of theirs into the character of God, and blended together what was theirs and what is His. Valuable as a proof of the instinctive testimony of man's heart to the realities of Retribution: utterly worthless as a testimony to the form in which retributive Justice works, because not borne out by the facts of life.

Again, that notion was false, in that it expects vengeance for flagrant crime only. "This man is a murderer." There is a common and superstitious feeling now to that effect, "Murder will out:" as if God had set a black mark on murder; as if, because it is unlikely to escape detection in a country where every man's hand is against the murderer, impunity was not common enough in countries where human life is held cheap. The truth is, we think much of crime — little of sin. There is many a murderer executed whose heart is pure and whose life is white, compared with those of many a man who lives a respectable, and even honored life. David was a murderer. The Pharisees had committed no crime, but their heart was rotten at the core. There was in it the sin which has no forgiveness. It is not a Christian, but a Barbarian estimate, which ranks crime above sin, and takes murder for the chief of sins marked out for Heaven's vengeance.

As information increases *this* idea of retribution disappears. Natural laws are understood, and retribution vanishes. Then comes Epicureanism, or Atheism. "All things come alike to all: there is one end to the righteous and to the sinner; to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not." This is the feeling of the voluptuary of Ecclesiastes. If so, then the inference suggests itself to Epicurean indolence, "Let us eat and drink," — it is all the same. Or, the sceptical feeling comes thus: "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." For assuredly there is no vengeance such as this, which suffers not the

murderer to live, but arms the powers of nature against him. Why do right, instead of wrong?

Then the idea of Retribution is gone for those who see no deeper than the outward chance of penalty.

The Advent brought deeper and truer views. It taught what sin is, and what suffering is. It showed the Innocent on the Cross, bearing the penalty of the world's sin; but Himself the Son of God, with whom the Father was not angry, but "well pleased."

The penal agonies of sin are chiefly those which are executed within. "Vengeance," said the *Melitans*, "suffereth not the murderer to live." "Whosoever slayeth Cain," said *God*, "vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold." Cain, the murderer, lives; CHRIST, the Holy, dies. Cain is to us the dread type of Hell. To live! that is Hell — to live when you fain would die. There is such a thing as being salted with fire — a never annihilating but still consuming torture. You may escape the viper and the wreck. You may, by prudence, make this world painless, more or less. You cannot escape yourself. Go where you will, you carry with you a soul degraded, its power lost, its finer sensibilities destroyed. Worse than the viper's tooth is the punishment of no longer striving after goodness, or aspiring after the life of God. Just as the man cannot see through the glass on which he breathes, sin darkens the windows of the soul. You cannot look out even to know the glories of the fair world from which your soul excludes itself. There is no punishment equal to the punishment of being base. To sink from sin to sin, from infamy to infamy, that is the fearful retribution which is executed in the spiritual world. You are safe, go where you will, from the viper: as safe as

if you were the holiest of God's children. The fang is in your soul.

III. The Barbarian conception of Deity.

When the viper fell off, and Paul was left uninjured, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

1. Observe, first, this implied a certain advance in religious notions. There is a stage of worship prior to that of man-worship. Man finds himself helpless among the powers of nature, and worships the forces themselves which he finds around him. This takes different forms. The highest is the worship of that host of heaven from which Job professed himself to be free. With some it is the adoration of lifeless things: the oak which has been made sacred by the lightning-stroke, the "meteoric stone" which fell down from Jupiter. So the Israelites adored the brazen serpent, with which power had once been in connection. Evidently there can be no holy influence in this. Men worship them by fear, fortify themselves by charms and incantations, do not try to please God by being holy, but defend themselves from danger by jugglery. The Christians of the early ages carried about bits of consecrated bread to protect themselves from shipwreck.

Besides this, men have worshipped brute life: some animal, exhibiting a limited quality, which is reckoned a type of the Divine. The hawk-eyed deities of Egypt, for instance, implied omniscience. Beast-worship was that of Egypt. Israel learned it there, and in an early stage of their history imitated the highest form which they knew,— that of Apis, in their golden calf.

It is quite clear that the Melitans were in a stage beyond this. It is a step when men rise from the worship of lifeless things to that of animals; another when they rise to worship human qualities — for they *are* nearest the Divine. Perhaps a step higher still, when, like the early Romans, they worship a Principle like Destiny, separate from all shape. They were in the stage of worshipping what is human.

2. But, in this worship of the human, we have to distinguish that it was the adoration of the marvellous, not the reverence for the Good. It was not Paul's character to which they yielded homage. It was only to the wonderful mystery of, as they supposed, his miraculous escape. So, too, at Lystra. It was the miracle which they chiefly saw.

All that would pass away when they knew that he was a man of like passions with themselves; or when they were informed that it was a Providential escape, which might have happened to any ordinary man. When the savage sees the flash of European fire-arms, he kneels as to a god: but when he has learned its use, his new religion is gone. When the Americans first saw the winged ships of Spain, they thought that the deities spoke in thunder; but when they discovered the secret of their humanity, the worship ceased. And thus science is every day converting the religion of mere wonder into Atheism. The mere worship of the mysterious has a limited existence. As you teach Laws, you undermine *that* religion. Men cease to tremble. The Laplander would no longer be awed by the eclipse, if he knew how to calculate it with unerring accuracy. The savage's dread of lightning, as the bolt of God is over when he sees the philosopher

draw it from the clouds, and experimentalize on it in his laboratory. The awe created by a pestilence is passed, when it is found to be strictly under the guidance of natural laws. And the Romanist, or the semi-Romanist, whose religion is chiefly a sense of the mysterious, the solemn, the awful, and whose flesh creeps when he sees a miracle in the consecration of the sacraments, ends, as is well known, in infidelity when enlightenment and reason have struck the ground of false reverence from beneath his feet.

It is upon this indisputable basis that the mightiest system of modern Atheism has been built. The great founder of that system divides all human history into three periods. The first, in which the supernatural is believed in, and a personal Agent is believed in as the cause of all phenomena. The second, in which metaphysical abstractions are assumed as Causes. The third, the Positive stage, in which nothing is expected but the knowledge of sequences by Experience; the Absolute, that lies beneath all phenomena, being forever unknowable, and a God, if there be a God, undiscoverable by the intellect of man.

This conclusion is irrefragable. Granted that the only basis of religion is awe, a worship of the marvellous,—then, verily, there remains nothing for the human race to end in but blank and ghastly Atheism.

Therefore has the Redeemer's Advent taught a deeper truth to man. The Apostle Paul spoke almost slightingly of the marvellous. "Covet earnestly the best gifts: yet show I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or

a tinkling cymbal." Love is diviner than all wondrous powers.

So, too, the Son of God came into this world depreciating the merely mysterious. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. No sign shall be given to it." — "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Nay, His own miracles themselves, so far as the merely wondrous in them was concerned, He was willing, on one occasion at least, to place on the same level with the real or supposed ones of Exorcists among themselves. "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out?" It was not the power, nor the supernatural in them, which proved them divine. It was their peculiar character, — their benevolence, their goodness, their love, — which manifested Deity.

Herein lies the vast fallacy of the French sceptic. The worship of the supernatural must legitimately end in Atheism as science progresses. Yes, all science removes the Cause of causes further and further back from human ken, so that the baffled intellect is compelled to confess at last we cannot find it. But "the world by wisdom knew not God." There is a power in the soul, quite separate from the intellect, which sweeps away or recognizes the marvellous, by which God is felt. Faith stands serenely far above the reach of the Atheism of Science. It does not rest on the Wonderful, but on the Eternal Wisdom and Goodness of God. The Revelation of the Son was to proclaim a Father, not a Mystery. No Science can sweep away the Everlasting Love which the *heart* feels, and which the intellect does not even pretend to judge or recognize. And he is safe from the inevita-

ble decay which attends the mere barbarian worshi
who has felt, that as Faith is the strongest power i
the mind of man, so is Love the Divinest principle i
the bosom of God: in other words, who adores Go
known in Christ, rather than trembles before the U
known, whose homage is yielded to Divine Charact
rather than Divine Power.

XIV.

[Preached December 15, 1849.]

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST.

[redacted] vi. 7, 8. — "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

THERE is a close analogy between the world of nature and the world of spirit. They bear the impress of the same hand; and hence the principles of nature and its laws are the types and shadows of the Invisible. Just as two books, though on different subjects, proceeding from the same pen, manifest indications of the thought of one mind, so the worlds visible and invisible are two books, written by the same finger, and governed by the same Idea. Or, rather, they are but one Book, separated into two only by the narrow range of our ken. For it is impossible to study the universe at all without perceiving that it is one system. Begin with what science you will, as soon as you get beyond the rudiments, you are constrained to associate it with another.

You cannot study agriculture long without finding that it absorbs into itself meteorology and chemistry; sciences run into one another till you get the "con-

nection of the sciences;" and you begin to learn that one Divine Idea connects the whole in one system of perfect Order.

It was upon this principle that Christ taught. Truths come forth from his lips not stated simply on authority, but based on the analogy of the universe. His human mind, in perfect harmony with the Divine Mind with which it mixed, discerned the connection of things, and read the Eternal Will in the simplest laws of Nature. For instance, if it were a question whether God would give His Spirit to them that asked, it was not replied to by a truth revealed on His *authority;* the answer was derived from facts lying open to all men's observation. "Behold the fowls of the air," — "behold the lilies of the field," — learn from them the answer to your question. A principle was there. God supplies the wants which He has created. He feeds the ravens; He clothes the lilies; He will feed with His Spirit the craving spirits of his children.

It was on this principle of analogy that St. Paul taught in this text. He tells us that there is a law in nature according to which success is proportioned to the labor spent upon the work. In kind and in degree.—Success is attained in kind: for example, he who has sowed his field with beechmast does not receive a plantation of oaks; a literary education is not the road to distinction in arms, but to success in letters; years spent on agriculture do not qualify a man to be an orator, but they make him a skilful farmer. Success, again, is proportioned to labor in degree; because, ordinarily, as is the amount of seed sown, so is the harvest: he who studies much will

know more than he who studies little. In almost all departments it is "the diligent hand which maketh rich."

The keen eye of Paul discerned this principle reaching far beyond what is seen, into the spiritual realm which is unseen. As tare-seed comes up tares, and wheat-seed wheat, and as the crop in both cases is in proportion to two conditions, the labor and the quantity committed to the ground, — so in things spiritual, too, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Not something else, but "*that*." The proportion holds in kind: it holds too in degree, in spiritual things as in natural. "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." If we could understand and rightly expound that principle, we should be saved from much of the disappointment and surprise which come from extravagant and unreasonable expectations. I shall try first to elucidate the principle which these verses contain, and then examine the two branches of the principle.

I. *The principle* is this: "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

There are two kinds of good possible to men — one enjoyed by our animal being, the other felt and appreciated by our spirits. Every man understands, more or less, the difference between these two: between prosperity and well-doing; between indulgence and noldeness; between comfort and inward peace; between pleasure and striving after perfection; between happiness and blessedness. These are two kinds of harvest, and the labor necessary for them

respectively is of very different kinds. The labo- which procures the harvest of the one has no tend- ency to secure the other.

We will not depreciate the advantages of thi world. It is foolish and unreal to do so. Comfor affluence, success, freedom from care, rank, station — those are in their way real goods: only, the labo- bestowed upon them does not procure one singl- blessing that is spiritual.

On the other hand, the seed which is sown for spiritual harvest has no tendency whatever to procure temporal well-being. Let us see what are the laws of the sowing and reaping in this department. Christ has declared them: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." — "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (with righteousness). — "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." You observe — the beatific vision of the Almighty — fulness of righteousness — comfort. There is nothing earthly — spiritual results for spiritual labor. It is not said that the pure in heart shall be made rich; nor that they who hunger after goodness shall be filled with bread; nor that they who mourn shall rise in life, and obtain distinction. Each department has its own appropriate harvest, reserved exclusively to its own method of sowing.

Everything in this world has its price; and the price buys that, not something else. Every harvest demands its own preparation, and that preparation will not produce another sort of harvest. Thus, for example, you cannot have at once the soldier's renown and the quiet of a recluse's life. The soldier pays his

price for his glory — sows and reaps. His price is risk of life and limb, nights spent on the hard ground, a weather-beaten constitution. If you will not pay that price, you cannot have what he has — military reputation. You cannot enjoy the statesman's influence together with freedom from public notoriety. If you sensitively shrink from that, you must give up influence; or else pay his price, — the price of a thorny pillow, unrest, the chance of being to-day a nation's idol, to-morrow the people's execration. You cannot have the store of information possessed by the student, and enjoy robust health. Pay his price, and you have his reward. His price is an emaciated frame, a debilitated constitution, a transparent hand, and the rose taken out of the sunken cheek. To have these opposite things, — a soldier's glory and quiet, a statesman's renown and peace, the student's prize and rude health, — would be to mock God, to reap what has not been sowed.

Now, the mistakes men make, and the extravagant expectation in which they indulge, are these: — they sow for earth, and expect to win spiritual blessings; or, they sow to the spirit, and then wonder that they have not a harvest of the good things of earth. In each case they complain, What have I done to be treated so?

The unreasonableness of all this appears the moment we have understood the conditions contained in this principle, "Whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap."

It is a common thing to hear sentimental wonderings about the unfairness of the distribution of things here. The unprincipled get on in life; the saints are

kept back. The riches and rewards of life fall to the lot of the undeserving. The rich man has his good things, and Lazarus his evil things. Whereupon it is taken for granted that there must be a future life to make this fair: that if there were none, the constitution of this world would be unjust. That is, that because a man who has sown to the Spirit does not reap to the flesh here, he will hereafter: that the meed of well-doing must be, somewhere in the universe, the same kind of recompense which the rewards of the unprincipled were here,—comfort, abundance, physical enjoyment,—or else all is wrong.

But, if you look into it, the balance is perfectly adjusted even here. God has made his world much better than you and I could make it. Everything reaps its own harvest, every act has its own reward. And before you covet the enjoyment which another possesses, you must first calculate the cost at which it was procured.

For instance,—the religious tradesman complains that his honesty is a hindrance to his success; that the tide of custom pours into the doors of his less scrupulous neighbors in the same street, while he himself waits for hours idle. My brother! do you think that God is going to reward honor, integrity, high-mindedness, with this world's coin? Do you fancy that He will pay spiritual excellence with plenty of custom? Now, consider the price that man has paid for his success. Perhaps mental degradation and inward dishonor. His advertisements are all deceptive; his treatment of his workmen, tyrannical; his cheap prices made possible by inferior articles. Sow that man's seed, and you will reap that man's harvest.

Cheat, lie, advertise, be unscrupulous in your assertions,—custom will come to you. But, if the price is too dear, let him have his harvest, and take yours. Yours is a clear conscience, a pure mind, rectitude within and without. Will you part with that for his? Then why do you complain? He has paid his price,—you do not choose to pay it.

Again; it is not an uncommon thing to see a man rise from insignificance to sudden wealth by speculation. Within the last ten or twenty years, England has gazed on many such a phenomenon. In this case, as in spiritual things, the law seems to hold: "He that hath, to him shall be given." Tens of thousands soon increase and multiply to hundreds of thousands. His doors are besieged by the rich and great. Royalty banquets at his table, and nobles court his alliance. Whereupon some simple Christian is inclined to complain: "How strange that so much prosperity should be the lot of mere cleverness!" Well, are these really God's chief blessings? Is it for such as these you serve him? And would these indeed satisfy your soul? Would you have God reward His saintliest with these gauds and gewgaws,—all this trash, rank, and wealth, and equipages, and plate, and courtship from the needy great? Call you that the heaven of the holy? Compute, now, what was paid for that. The price that merchant prince paid, perhaps with the blood of his own soul, was shame and guilt. The price he is paying now is perpetual dread of detection: or, worse still, the hardness which can laugh at detection: or, one deep lower yet, the low and grovelling soul which can be satisfied with these things as a Paradise, and ask no higher. He

has reaped enjoyment, — yes, and he has sown, too, the seed of infamy. It is all fair. Count the cost. "He that saveth his life shall lose it." Save your life, if you like; but do not complain if you lose your nobler life — yourself. Win the whole world; but remember you do it by losing your own soul. Every sin must be paid for; every sensual indulgence is a harvest, the price for which is so much ruin for the soul. "*God is not mocked.*"

Once more: Religious men in every profession are surprised to find that many of its avenues are closed to them. The conscientious churchman complains that his delicate scruples, or his bold truthfulness, stand in the way of his preferment: while another man, who conquers his scruples, or softens the eye of truth, rises, and sits down a mitred peer in Parliament. The honorable lawyer feels that his practice is limited, while the unprincipled practitioner receives all he loses; and the Christian physician feels sore and sad at perceiving that charlatanism succeeds in winning employment; or, if not charlatanism, at least that affability and courtly manners take the place that is due to superior knowledge. Let such men take comfort, and judge fairly. Popularity is one of the things of an earthly harvest, for which quite earthly qualifications are required. I say not always dishonorable qualifications; but a certain flexibility of disposition, — a certain courtly willingness to sink obnoxious truths, and adapt ourselves to the prejudices of the minds of others, — a certain adroitness at catching the tone of those with whom we are. Without some of these things no man can be popular in any profession. But you have resolved to be a liver, a

...er, a champion of the truth. Your ambition is to ...e pure in the last recesses of the mind You have your reward: — a soul upright and manly; a fearless bearing, that dreads to look no man in the face; a willingness to let men search you through and through, and defy them to see any difference between what you seem and what you are. Now, your price — your price is dislike. The price of being true is the Cross. The warrior of the truth must not expect success. What have you to do with popularity? Sow for it, and you will have it. But, if you wish for it, or wish for peace, you have mistaken your calling: you must not be a teacher of the truth; you must not cut prejudice against the grain; you must leave medical, legal, theological truth to harder and nobler men, who are willing to take the martyr's cross and win the martyr's crown. This is the mistake men make. They expect both harvests, paying only one price. They would be blessed with goodness and prosperity at once. They would have that on which they bestowed no labor. They take sinful pleasure, and think it very hard that they must pay for it in agony, and, worse than agony, souls deteriorated. They would monopolize heaven in their souls, and the world's prizes at the same time. This is to expect to come back, like Joseph's brethren from the land of plenty, with the corn in their sacks, and the money returned, too, in their sacks' mouths. No, no: it will not do. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." Reap *what* you have sown. If you sow the wind, do not complain if your harvest is the whirlwind. If you sow to the Spirit, be content with a spiritual reward — invisible — within — more life and higher life.

II. Next, the two branches of the application of this principle.

First, "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." There are two kinds of life: one of the flesh — another of the Spirit. Amidst the animal and selfish desires of our natures there is a Voice which clearly speaks of Duty, Right, Perfection. This is the Spirit of Deity in man; it is the life of God in the soul. This is the evidence of our Divine parentage.

But there is a double temptation to live the other life instead of this. First, the desires of our animal nature are *keener* than those of our spiritual. The cry of Passion is louder than the calm voice of Duty. Next, the reward in the case of our sensitive nature is given *sooner*. It takes a less time to amass a fortune than to become heavenly-minded. It costs less to indulge an appetite than it does to gain the peace of lulled passion. And hence, when men feel that, for the spiritual blessing, the bread must be cast upon the waters, which shall not be found until after many days (scepticism whispers, "never!"), it is quite intelligible why they choose the visible and palpable instead of the invisible advantage, and plan for an immediate harvest rather than a distant one.

The other life is that of the flesh. The "flesh" includes all the desires of our unrenewed nature — the harmless as well as sinful. Any labor, therefore, which is bounded by present well-being, is *sowing* to the flesh, whether it be the gratification of an immediate impulse, or the long-contrived plan, reaching forward over many years. Sowing to the flesh includes, therefore:

1. Those who live in open riot. He sows to the flesh who pampers its unruly animal appetites. Do not think that I speak contemptuously of our animal nature, as if it were not human and sacred. The lowest feelings of our nature become sublime by being made the instruments of our nobler emotions. Love, self-command, will elevate them all: and to ennoble and purify, not to crush them, is the long, slow work of Christian life. Christ, says St. Paul, is the Saviour of the *Body*. But if, instead of subduing these to the life of the spirit, a man gives to them the rein, and even the spur, the result is not difficult to foresee. There are men who do this. They "make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." They whet the appetites by indulgence. They whip the jaded senses to their work. Whatever the constitutional bias may be,—anger, intemperance, epicurism, indolence, desire,—there are societies, conversations, scenes, which supply fuel for the flame, as well as opposite ones which cut off the nutriment. Now, to indulge in these, knowing the result, is to foster the desire which brings forth the sin that ends in death. This is "sowing to the flesh."

If there be one to whom these words which I have used, veiled in the proprieties due to delicate reserve, are not without meaning, from this sentence of God's word let him learn his doom. He is looking forward to a harvest wherein he may reap the fruit of his present anticipations. And he *shall* reap it. He shall have his indulgence; he shall enjoy his guilty rapture; he shall have his unhallowed triumph; and the boon companions of his pleasures shall award him the meed of their applause. He has sown the seed; and, in fair

requital, he shall have his harvest. It is all fair. He shall enjoy. But tarry a while; the law hath yet another hold upon him. This deep law of the whole universe goes further. He has sown to the flesh, and of the flesh he has reaped pleasure: he has sown to the flesh, and of the flesh he shall reap corruption. That is, in his case, the ruin of the soul. It is an awful thing to see a soul in ruins; like a temple which once was fair and noble, but now lies overthrown, matted with ivy, weeds, and tangled briers, among which things noisome crawl and live. He shall reap the harvest of disappointment — the harvest of bitter, useless remorse. The crime of sense is avenged by sense, which wears by time. He shall have the worm that gnaws, and the fire that is not quenched. He shall reap the fruit of long-indulged desires, which have become tyrannous at last, and constitute him his own tormentor. His harvest is a soul in flames, and the tongue that no drop can cool. Passions that burn, and appetites that crave, when the power of enjoyment is gone. He has sowed to the flesh. "God is not mocked." The man reaps.

2. There is a less gross way of sowing to the flesh. There are men of sagacity and judgment in the affairs of this life, whose penetration is almost intuitive in all things where the step in question involves success or failure here. They are those who are called in the parable the children of this world, wise in their generation. They moralize and speculate about eternity, but do not plan for it. There is no seed sown for an invisible harvest. If they think they have sown for such a harvest, they might test themselves by the question, what they would lose if there were to be no

eternity. For the children of God, so far as earth is concerned, "If in this life only they have hope in Christ, then are they of all men most miserable." But *they* — these sagacious, prudent men of this world — they have their reward. What have they sacrificed, given up, sacrificed, which is all lost forever, if this world be all? What have they buried like seed in the ground, lost forever, if there be no eternity?

Now, we do not say these men are absolutely wicked. We distinguish between their sowing to the flesh and the sowing of these profligates last spoken of. All we say is, there is "corruption" written on their harvest. It was for earth; and with earth it perishes. It may be the labor of the statesman planning, like the Roman of old, the government and order of the kingdoms of the earth; or that of the astronomer, weighing suns, prescribing rules of return to comets, and dealing with things above earth in space, but unspiritual still; or that of the son of a humbler laboriousness, whose work is merely to provide for a family; or, lastly, the narrower range of the man of pleasure, whose chief care is where he shall spend the next season,—in what metropolis, or which watering place, or how best enjoy the next entertainment. Objects more or less harmless all. But they end. The pyramid crumbles into dust, at last. The mighty empire of the eternal city breaks into fragments which disappear. The sowers for earth have their harvest here: success in their schemes — quiet intellectual enjoyment — exemption from pain and loss — the fruits of worldly-wise sagacity. And that is all. "When the breath goes forth, they return

to their dust, and all their thoughts perish." The grave is not to them the gate of paradise, but simply the impressive mockery which the hand of death writes upon that body for which they lived, and with which all is gone. They reap corruption, for all they have toiled for decays.

Ye that lead the life of respectable worldliness! let these considerations arrest your indifference to the Gospel. You have sown for earth. — Well. And then — what? Hear the Gospel. A Saviour whose Sacrifice is the world's life, whose death is the law of life, from whose resurrection streams a Spirit which can change carnal into spiritual men, — whose whole existence, reflecting God, was the utterance of the Divine truth and rule of heavenly life, the blessedness of giving, — to live so, and to believe so, is to sow to the Spirit.

Lastly: — *Sowing to the Spirit.* "He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

What is meant by sowing to the Spirit here is plain. "Let us not be weary in well-doing," says the apostle directly after: "for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." *Well-doing:* not faith, but works of goodness, were the sowing that he spoke of.

There is proclaimed here the rewardableness of works. So in many other passages: "Abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." — "Laying up a good foundation for the time to come," was the reason alleged for charging rich men to be willing to give — and so all through. There is an irreversible principle. The amount of harvest is proportioned to

the seed sown exactly. There are degrees of glory. The man who gives out of his abundance has one blessing. She who gives the mite, all she had, even all her living, has another, quite different. The rectitude of this principle, and what it is, will be plainer from the following considerations.

1. The harvest is Life Eternal. But Eternal Life here does not simply mean a life that lasts forever. That is the destiny of the *Soul:* all souls, bad as well as good. But the bad do not enter into this "Eternal Life." It is not simply the duration, but the quality of the life, which constitutes its character of Eternal. A spirit may live forever, yet not enter into this. And a man may live but for five minutes the life of Divine benevolence, or desire for perfectness: in those five minutes he has entered into the life which is Eternal, never fluctuates, but is the same unalterably forever, in the Life of God. *This* is the Reward.

2. The reward is not arbitrary, but natural. God's rewards and God's punishments are all natural. Distinguish between arbitrary and natural. Death is an arbitrary punishment for forgery: it might be changed for transportation. It is not naturally connected. It depends upon the will of the law-maker. But trembling nerves are the direct and the natural results of intemperance. They are, in the order of nature, the results of wrong-doing. The man reaps *what* he has sown. Similarly in rewards. If God gave riches in return for humbleness, that would be an arbitrary connection. He did give such a reward to Solomon. But when He gives Life Eternal, meaning by Life Eternal, not duration of existence,

but heavenly quality of existence, as explained already, it is all natural. The seed sown in the ground contains in itself the future harvest. The harvest is but the development of the germ of life in the seed. A holy act strengthens the inward holiness. It is a seed of life growing into more life. "Whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he reap." He that sows much thereby becomes more conformed to God than he was before, in heart and spirit. That is his reward and harvest. And just as among the apostles there was one whose spirit, attuned to love made him emphatically the disciple whom Jesus loved, so shall there be some who, by previous discipline of the Holy Ghost, shall have more of His mind, and understand more of His love, and drink deeper of His joy, than others — they that have sowed bountifully.

Every act done in Christ receives its exact and appropriate reward. They that are meek shall inherit the earth. They that are pure shall see God. They that suffer shall reign with Him. They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever. They that receive a righteous man in the name of a righteous man — that is, because he is a righteous man — shall receive a righteous man's reward. Even the cup of cold water, given in the name of Christ, shall not lose its reward.

It will be, therefore, seen at once, Reward is not the result of merit. It is, in the order of grace, the natural consequence of well-doing. It is life becoming more life. It is the soul developing itself. It is the Holy Spirit of God in man, making itself more felt, and mingling more and more with his soul, — feeding

re consciously, with an ever-increasing heaven.
u reap what you sow; — not something else, but
t. An act of love makes the soul more loving.
deed of humbleness deepens humbleness. The
ng reaped is the very thing sown, multiplied a
ndred-fold. You have sown a seed of life — you
p life.

XV.

(Preached December 31, 1849.)

THE LONELINESS OF CHRIST.

JOHN xvi. 31, 32. — "Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

THERE are two kinds of solitude: the first consisting of insulation in space; the other, of isolation of the spirit. The first is simply separation by distance. When we are seen, touched, heard by none, we are said to be alone. And all hearts respond to the truth of that saying, This is not solitude; for sympathy can people our solitude with a crowd. The fisherman on the ocean alone at night is not alone, when he remembers the earnest longings which are arising up to heaven at home for his safety. The traveller is not alone, when the faces which will greet him on his arrival seem to beam upon him as he trudges on. The solitary student is not alone, when he feels that human hearts will respond to the truths which he is preparing to address to them.

The other is loneliness of soul. There are times when hands touch ours, but only send an icy chill of

unsympathizing indifference to the heart; when eyes gaze into ours, but with a glazed look which cannot read into the bottom of our souls; when words pass from our lips, but only come back as an echo reverberated without reply through a dreary solitude; when the multitude throng and press us, and we cannot say, as Christ said, "Somebody hath *touched* me!" for the contact has been not between soul and soul, but only between form and form.

And there are two kinds of men, who feel this last solitude in different ways. The first are the men of self-reliance, — self-dependent: who ask no counsel, and crave no sympathy; who act and resolve alone, — who can go sternly through duty, and scarcely shrink, let what will be crushed in them. Such men command respect: for whoever respects himself constrains the respect of others. They are invaluable in all those professions of life in which sensitive feeling would be a superfluity: they make iron commanders, surgeons who do not shrink, and statesmen who do not flinch from their purpose for the dread of unpopularity. But mere self-dependence is weakness; and the conflict is terrible when a human sense of weakness is felt by such men. Jacob was alone when he slept in his way to Padan Aram, the first night that he was away from his father's roof, with the world before him, and all the old broken up; and Elijah was alone in the wilderness when the court had deserted him, and he said, "They have digged down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I, only am left, and they seek my life to take it away." But the loneliness of the tender Jacob was very different from that of the stern Elijah. To

Jacob the sympathy he yearned for was realiz[illegible] in the form of a gentle dream. A ladder raised fr[illegible] earth to heaven figured the possibility of commu[illegible] ion between the spirit of man and the Spirit of G[illegible] In Elijah's case, the storm, and the earthquake, a[illegible] the fire, did their convulsing work in the soul, befo[illegible] a still, small voice told him that he was not alone. In such a spirit the sense of weakness comes with a burst of agony, and the dreadful conviction of being alone manifests itself with a rending of the heart of rock. It is only so that such souls can be taught that the Father is with them, and that they are not alone.

There is another class of men, who live in sympathy. These are affectionate minds, which tremble at the thought of being alone: not from want of courage nor from weakness of intellect comes their dependence upon others, but from the intensity of their affections. It is the trembling spirit of humanity in them. They want not aid, nor even countenance, but only sympathy. And the trial comes to them not in the shape of fierce struggle, but of chill and utter loneliness, when they are called upon to perform a duty on which the world looks coldly, or to embrace a truth which has not found lodgment yet in the breasts of others.

It is to this latter and not to the former class that we must look, if we would understand the spirit in which the words of the text were pronounced. The deep Humanity of the Soul of Christ was gifted with those finer sensibilities of affectionate nature which stand in need of sympathy. He not only gave sympathy, but wanted it, too, from others. He who selected

the gentle John to be his friend,—who found solace in female sympathy, attended by the women who ministered to Him out of their substance,—who in the Trial hour could not bear even to pray without the human presence, which is the pledge and reminder of God's presence, had nothing in Him of the hard, merely self-dependent character. Even this verse testifies to the same fact. A stern spirit never could have said, "I am not alone: the Father is with me;" never would have felt the loneliness which needed the balancing truth. These words tell of a struggle, an inward reasoning, a difficulty and a reply, a sense of solitude,—"I shall be alone;" and an immediate correction of that: "Not alone: the Father is with Me."

There is no thought connected with the Life of Christ more touching, none that seems so peculiarly to characterize His Spirit, as the solitariness in which he lived. Those who understood Him best only understood him half. Those who knew Him best scarcely could be said to know Him. On this occasion the disciples thought, Now we do understand, now we do believe. The lonely Spirit answered, "*Do* ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone."

Very impressive is that trait in His history. He was in this world alone.

I. First, then, we meditate on the loneliness of Christ.

II. On the temper of His solitude.

1. The loneliness of Christ was caused by the Divine elevation of His character. His infinite superiority severed Him from sympathy; His exquisite affectionateness made that want of sympathy a keen trial.

There is a second-rate greatness which the world can comprehend. If we take two who are brought into direct contrast by Christ Himself, the one the type of human, the other that of Divine excellence, the Son of Man and John the Baptist, this becomes clearly manifest. John's life had a certain rude, rugged goodness, on which was written, in characters which required no magnifying-glass to read, spiritual excellence. The world, on the whole, accepted him. Pharisees and Sadducees went to his baptism. The people idolized him as a prophet; and, if he had not chanced to cross the path of a weak prince and a revengeful woman, we can see no reason why John might not have finished his course with joy, recognized as irreproachable. If we inquire why it was that the world accepted John and rejected Christ, one reply appears to be, that the life of the one was finitely simple and one-sided, that of the Other divinely complex. In physical nature, the naturalist finds no difficulty in comprehending the simple structure of the lowest organizations of animal life, where one uniform texture, and one organ performing the office of brain and heart and lungs, at once, leave little to perplex. But when he comes to study the complex anatomy of man, he has the labor of a lifetime before him. It is not difficult to master the constitution of a single country; but when you try to understand the universe,

you find infinite appearances of contradiction: law opposed by law; motion balanced by motion; happiness blended with misery; and the power to elicit a divine order and unity out of this complex variety is given to only a few of the gifted of the race. That which the structure of man is to the structure of the insect, that which the universe is to a single country, the complex and boundless soul of Christ was to the souls of other men. Therefore, to the superficial observer, His life was a mass of inconsistencies and contradictions. All thought themselves qualified to point out the discrepancies. The Pharisees could not comprehend how a holy Teacher could eat with publicans and sinners. His own brethren could not reconcile His assumption of a public office with the privacy which He aimed at keeping. "If thou doest these things, show thyself to the world." Some thought He was "a good man;" others said, "Nay, but He deceiveth the people." And hence it was that He lived to see all that acceptance which had marked the earlier stage of His career—as, for instance, at Capernaum—melt away. First, the Pharisees took the alarm; then the Sadducees; then the political party of the Herodians; then the people. That was the most terrible of all: for the enmity of the upper classes is impotent; but when that cry of brute force is stirred from the deeps of society, as deaf to the voice of reason as the ocean in its strength churned into raving foam by the winds, the heart of mere earthly oak quails before that. The apostles, at all events, did quail. One denied; another betrayed; all deserted. They "were scattered, each to his own:" and the Truth Himself was left alone in Pilate's judgment-hall.

Now learn from this a very important distinction. To feel solitary is no uncommon thing. To complain of being alone, without sympathy, and misunderstood, is general enough. In every place, in many a family, these victims of diseased sensibility are to be found, and they might find a weakening satisfaction in observing a parallel between their own feelings and those of Jesus. But before that parallel is assumed, be very sure that it is, as in His case, the elevation of your character which severs you from your species. The world has small sympathy for Divine goodness; but it also has little for a great many other qualities which are disagreeable to it. You meet with no response; you are passed by; find yourself unpopular; meet with little communion. Well! Is that because you are above the world,—nobler, devising and executing grand plans, which they cannot comprehend; vindicating the wronged; proclaiming and living on great principles; offending it by the saintliness of your purity, and the unworldliness of your aspirations? Then yours is the loneliness of Christ. Or is it that you are wrapped up in self,—cold, disobliging, sentimental, indifferent about the welfare of others, and very much astonished that they are not deeply interested in you? *You* must not use these words of Christ. They have nothing to do with you.

Let us look at one or two of the occasions on which this loneliness was felt.

The first time was when He was but twelve years old, when His parents found Him in the temple, hearing the Doctors and asking them questions. High thoughts were in the Child's soul: expanding views of life; larger views of duty, and His own destiny.

There is a moment in every true life — to some it comes very early — when the old routine of duty is not large enough; when the parental roof seems too low, because the Infinite above is arching over the soul; when the old formulas, in creeds, catechisms, and articles, seem to be narrow, and they must either be thrown aside, or else transformed into living and breathing realities; when the earthly father's authority is being superseded by the claims of a Father in heaven.

That is a lonely, lonely moment, when the young soul first feels God — when this earth is recognized as an "awful place, yea, the very gate of heaven;" when the dream-ladder is seen planted against the skies, and we wake, and the dream haunts us as a sublime reality.

You may detect the approach of that moment in the young man or the young woman by the awakened spirit of inquiry; by a certain restlessness of look, and an eager earnestness of tone; by the devouring study of all kinds of books; by the waning of your own influence, while the inquirer is asking the truth of the Doctors and Teachers in the vast Temple of the world; by a certain opinionativeness, which is austere and disagreeable enough; but the austerest moment of the fruit's taste is that in which it is passing from greenness into ripeness. If you wait in patience, the sour will become sweet. Rightly looked at, that opinionativeness is more truly anguish; the fearful solitude of feeling the insecurity of all that is human; the discovery that life is real, and forms of social and religious existence hollow. The old moorings are torn away, and the soul is drifting, drifting, drifting, very

often without compass, except the guidance of an unseen hand, into the vast infinite of God. Then come the lonely words, and no wonder, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

2. That solitude was felt by Christ in trial. In the desert, in Pilate's judgment-hall, in the garden, He was alone; and alone must every son of man meet his trial-hour. The individuality of the soul necessitates that. Each man is a new soul in this world: untried, with a boundless Possible before him. No one can predict what he may become, prescribe his duties, or mark out his obligations. Each man's own nature has its own peculiar rules; and he must take up his life-plan alone, and persevere in it in a perfect privacy with which no stranger intermeddleth. Each man's temptations are made up of a host of peculiarities, internal and external, which no other mind can measure. You are tried alone; alone you pass into the desert; alone you must bear and conquer in the Agony; alone you must be sifted by the world. There are moments known only to a man's own self, when he sits by the poisoned springs of existence, "yearning for a morrow which shall free him from the strife." And there are trials more terrible than that. Not when vicious inclinations are opposed to holy, but when virtue conflicts with virtue, is the real rending of the soul in twain. A temptation, in which the lower nature struggles for mastery, can be met by the whole united force of the spirit. But it is when obedience to a heavenly Father can be only paid by disobedience to an earthly one; or fidelity to duty can be only kept by infidelity to some entangling engage

ment; or the straight path must be taken over the misery of others; or the counsel of the affectionate friend must be met with a "Get thee behind me, Satan:"—O! it is then, when human advice is unavailable, that the soul feels what it is to be alone.

Once more:—the Redeemer's soul was alone in dying. The hour had come,—they were all gone, and He was, as He predicted, left alone. All that is human drops from us in that hour. Human faces flit and fade, and the sounds of the world become confused. "I shall die alone,"—yes, and alone you live. The philosopher tells us that no atom in creation touches another atom,—they only approach within a certain distance; then the attraction ceases, and an invisible something repels,—they only *seem* to touch. No soul touches another soul except at one or two points, and those chiefly external,—a fearful and a lonely thought, but one of the truest of life. Death only realizes that which has been fact all along. In the central deeps of our being we are alone.

II. The spirit or temper of that solitude.

1. Observe its grandeur. I am alone, yet not alone. There is a feeble and sentimental way in which we speak of the Man of sorrows. We turn to the Cross, and the Agony, and the Loneliness, to touch the softer feelings—to arouse compassion. You degrade *that* loneliness by your compassion. Compassion! compassion for Him! Adore if you will,—respect and reverence that sublime solitariness with which none but the Father was,—but no pity; let it draw out the firmer and manlier graces of the soul. Even tender sympathy seems out of place.

For even in human things, the strength that is in a man can be only learnt when he is thrown upon his own resources and left alone. What a man can do in conjunction with others does not test the man. Tell us what he can do alone. It is one thing to defend the truth when you know that your audience are already prepossessed, and that every argument will meet a willing response; and it is another thing to hold the truth when truth must be supported, if at all, alone, — met by cold looks and unsympathizing suspicion. It is one thing to rush on to danger with the shouts and the sympathy of numbers; it is another thing when the lonely chieftain of the sinking ship sees the last boat-full disengage itself, and folds his arms to go down into the majesty of darkness, crushed, but not subdued.

Such and greater far was the strength and majesty of the Saviour's solitariness. It was not the trial of the lonely hermit. There is a certain gentle and pleasing melancholy in the life which is lived alone. But there are the forms of nature to speak to him; and he has not the positive opposition of mankind, if he has the absence of actual sympathy. It is a solemn thing, doubtless, to be apart from men, and to feel eternity rushing by like an arrowy river. But the solitude of Christ was the solitude of a crowd. In that single Human bosom dwelt the Thought which was to be the germ of the world's life — a thought unshared, misunderstood, or rejected. Can you not feel the grandeur of those words, when the Man, reposing on His solitary strength, felt the last shadow of perfect isolation pass across His soul: — "My God, my God, why hast *Thou* forsaken me?"

Next, learn from these words self-reliance. "Ye shall leave me alone." Alone, then, the Son of Man was content to be. He threw Himself on His own solitary thought: did not go down to meet the world; but waited, though it might be for ages, till the world should come round to Him. He appealed to the Future, did not aim at seeming consistent, left His contradictions unexplained: — I came from the Father, — I leave the world, and go to the Father. "Now," said they, "thou speakest no proverb:" that is, enigma. But many a hard and enigmatical saying before He had spoken, and He left them all. A thread runs through all true acts, stringing them together into one harmonious chain: but it is not for the Son of God to be anxious to prove their consistency with each other.

This is self-reliance — to repose calmly on the thought which is deepest in our bosoms, and be unmoved if the world will not accept it yet. To live on your own convictions against the world, is to overcome the world — to believe that what is truest in you is true for all: to abide by that, and not be over-anxious to be heard or understood, or sympathized with, certain that at last all must acknowledge the same, and that, while you stand firm, the world will come round to you — that is independence. It is not difficult to get away into retirement, and there live upon your own convictions; nor is it difficult to mix with men, and follow their convictions; but to enter into the world, and there live out firmly and fearlessly according to your own conscience — that is Christian greatness.

There is a cowardice in this age which is not Christian. We shrink from the consequences of truth. We look round and cling dependently. We ask what

men will think; what others will say; whether they will not stare in astonishment. Perhaps they will; but he who is calculating that will accomplish nothing in this life. The Father — the Father which is with us and in us — what does He think? God's work cannot be done without a spirit of independence. A man is got some way in the Christian life when he has learned to say humbly, and yet majestically, "I dare to be alone."

Lastly, remark the humility of this loneliness. Had the Son of Man simply said, I can be alone, He would have said no more than any proud, self-relying man can say; but when He added, "because the Father is with me," that independence assumed another character, and self-reliance became only another form of reliance upon God. Distinguish between genuine and spurious humility. There is a false humility which says, "It is my own poor thought, and I must not trust it. I must distrust my own reason and judgment, because they are my own. I must not accept the dictates of my own conscience; for is it not my own, and is not trust in self the great fault of our fallen nature?"

Very well. Now, remember something else. There is a Spirit which beareth witness with our spirits; there is a God who "is not far from any one of us;" there is a "Light which lighteth every man which cometh into the world." Do not be unnaturally humble. The thought of your own mind perchance is the Thought of God. To refuse to follow that may be to disown God. To take the judgment and conscience of other men to live by, where is the humility of that? From whence did their conscience and judgment come? Was the fountain from which they drew exhausted for

you? If they refused like you to rely on their own conscience, and you rely upon it, how are you sure that it is more the Mind of God than your own which you have refused to hear?

Look at it in another way. The charm of the words of great men — those grand sayings which are recognized as true as soon as heard — is this, that you recognize them as wisdom which passed across your own mind. You feel that they are your own thoughts come back to you, else you would not at once admit them: "All that floated across me before, only I could not say it, and did not feel confident enough to assert it, or had not conviction enough to put into words." Yes, God spoke to you what He did to them: only they believed it, said it, trusted the Word within them, and you did not. Be sure that often when you say, "It is only my own poor thought, and I am alone," the real correcting thought is this, "Alone, but the Father is with me," — therefore I can live by that lonely conviction.

There is no danger in this, whatever timid minds may think — no danger of mistake, if the character be a true one. For we are not in uncertainty in this matter. It has been given us to know our base from our noble hours: to distinguish between the voice which is from above, and that which speaks from below, out of the abyss of our animal and selfish nature. Samuel could distinguish between the impulse — quite a human one — which would have made him select Eliab out of Jesse's sons, and the deeper judgment by which "the *Lord* said, Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature, for I have refused him." Doubtless deep truth of character is required

for this: for the whispering voices get mixed together, and we dare not abide by our own thoughts, because we think them our own, and not God's: and this because we only now and then endeavor to know in earnest. It is only given to the habitually true to know the difference. He knew it, because all His blessed life long He could say, "My judgment is just, *because* I seek not my own will, but the will of Him which sent me."

The practical result and inference of all this is a very simple, but a very deep one: the deepest of existence. Let life be a life of faith. Do not go timorously about, inquiring what others think, and what others believe, and what others say. It seems the easiest, it is the most difficult thing in life to do this — believe in God. God is near you. Throw yourself fearlessly upon Him. Trembling mortal, there is an unknown might within your soul, which will wake when you command it. The day may come when all that is human — man and woman — will fall off from you, as they did from Him. Let His strength be yours. Be independent of them all now. The Father is with you. Look to Him, and He will save you.

XVI.

[Preached October 20, 1850.]

THE NEW COMMANDMENT OF LOVE TO ONE ANOTHER.

JOHN xiii. 34. — "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

THESE words derive impressiveness from having been spoken immediately before the last Supper, and on the eve of the great Sacrifice: the commandment of Love issued appropriately at the time of the Feast of Love, and not long before the great Act of Love. For the love of Christ was no fine *saying:* it cost Him His life to say these words with meaning, "As I have loved you."

There is a difficulty in the attempt to grasp the meaning of this command, arising from the fact that words change their meaning. Our Lord affixed a new significance to the word Love. It had been in use, of course, before, but the new sense in which He used it made it a new word.

His law is not adequately represented by the word Love; because love is, by conventional usage, appropriated to one species of human affection, which, in the commoner men, is the most selfish of all our feelings; in the best, too exclusive and individual to represent that charity which is universal.

Nor is charity a perfect symbol of his meaning; for charity by use is identified with another form of love, which is but a portion of it, — almsgiving; and too saturated with that meaning to be entirely disengaged from it, even when we use it most accurately.

Benevolence or philanthropy, in derivation, come nearer to the idea: but yet you feel at once that these words fall short; they are too tame and cool; too merely passive, as states of feeling rather than forms of life.

We have no sufficient word. There is, therefore, no help for it, but patiently to strive to master the meaning of this mighty word Love, in the only light that is left us, the light of the Saviour's life: "As I have loved you;" that alone expounds it.

We will dispossess our minds of all preconceived notions; remove all low associations, all partial and conventional ones. If we would understand this law, it must be ever a "new" commandment, ever receiving fresh light and meaning from His life.

Take, I. The novelty of the law — "That ye love one another."

II. The spirit or measure of it — "As I have loved you."

I. Its novelty. A "new commandment:" yet that law was old. See 1 John ii. 7, 8.

1. It was new as a historical fact. We talk of the apostolic mission as a matter of course; we say that the apostles were ordered to go and plant churches; and so we dismiss the great fact. But we forget that the command was rather the result of a spirit

working from within, than of an injunction working from without. That spirit was Love.

And when that new spirit was in the world, see how straightway it created a new thing. Men before that had travelled into foreign countries: the naturalist, to collect specimens; the historian, to accumulate facts; the philosopher, to hive up wisdom, or else he had stayed in his cell or grove to paint *pictures* of beautiful love. But the spectacle of an Apostle Paul crossing oceans, not to conquer kingdoms, nor to hive up knowledge, but to impart life, — not to accumulate stores for self, but to give, and to spend himself, — was new in the history of the world. The celestial fire had touched the hearts of men, and their hearts flamed; and it caught, and spread, and would not stop. On they went, that glorious band of brothers, in their strange enterprise, over oceans, and through forests, penetrating into the dungeon, and to the throne; to the hut of the savage feeding on human flesh, and to the shore lined with the skin-clad inhabitants of these far Isles of Britain. Read the account given by Tertullian of the marvellous rapidity with which the Christians increased and swarmed, and you are reminded of one of those vast armies of ants which move across a country in irresistible myriads, drowned by thousands in rivers, cut off by fire, consumed by man and beast, and yet fresh hordes succeeding interminably to supply their place.

A new voice was heard; a new yearning upon earth; man pining at being severed from his brother, and longing to burst the false distinctions which had kept the best hearts from each other so long; an infant cry of life — the cry of the young Church of

God. And all this from Judea — the narrowest, most bigoted, most intolerant nation on the face of the earth.

Now, I say that this was historically a new thing.

2. It was new in extent. It was, in literal words, an old commandment, given before both to Jew and Gentile. To the Jew; as, for instance, in Lev. xix. 18. To the Gentile, in the recognition which was so often made of the beauty of the law in its partial application, as in the case of friendship, patriotism, domestic attachment, and so on.

But the difference lay in the extent in which these words "one another" were understood. By them, or rather by "neighbor," the Jew meant his countryman; and narrowed that down again to his friends among his countrymen; so that the well-known Rabbinical gloss upon these words, current in the days of Christ, was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy." And what the Gentile understood by the extent of the law of love, we may learn from the well-known words of their best and wisest, who thanked heaven that he was born a man, and not a brute; a Greek, and not a barbarian; as if to be a barbarian were identical with being a brute.

Now, listen to Christ's exposition of the word neighbor. "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies." And He went further. As a specimen of a neighbor he specially selected one of that nation whom, as a theologian and a patriot, every Jew had been taught to hate. And just as the application of electricity to the innumerable wants of human life, and to new ends

is reckoned a new discovery and invention of modern times (though the fact has been familiar for ages to the Indian child in the forest of the far west, and applied by him for ages to his childish sports), so the extension of this grand principle of love to all the possible cases of life, and to all possible persons, — even though the principle was known and applied long before, in love to friends, country, and relations, — is truly and properly a new commandment — a discovery, a gospel, a revelation.

3. It is new in being made the central principle of a system. Never had obedience before been trusted to a principle: it had always been hedged round by a law. The religion of Christ is not a law, but a spirit, — not a creed, but a life. To the one motive of love God has intrusted the whole work of winning the souls of His redeemed. The heart of man was made for love; pants and pines for it: — only in the love of Christ, and not in restrictions, can his soul expand. Now, it was reserved for One to pierce, with the glance of intuition, down into the springs of human action, and to proclaim the simplicity of its machinery. "Love," said the apostle after Him, — "love is the fulfilling of the law."

We are told that in the new commandment the old perishes; that, under the law of love, man is free from the law of works. Let us see how.

Take any commandment, — for example, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth. I may abstain from murder and theft, deterred by law; because law has annexed to them certain penalties. But I may also rise into the spirit of Charity; then I am free from the law. The law was not made for a righteous man; the law

no more binds or restrains me, now that I love my neighbor, than the dike built to keep in the sea at high tide restrains it when that sea has sunk to low-water mark.

Or the seventh. You may keep that law from dread of discovery, — or you may learn a higher Love: and then you *cannot* injure a human soul — you cannot degrade a human spirit. Charity has made the old commandment superfluous. In the strong language of St. John, you *cannot* sin, because you are born of God.

It was the proclamation of this, the great living principle of human obedience, not with the pedantry of a philosopher, nor the exaggeration of an orator, but in the simple reality of life, which made this commandment of Christ a new commandment.

II. The spirit or measure of the law, — "*as* I have loved you."

Broadly, the love of Christ was the spirit of giving all he had to give. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." Christ's love was not a sentiment; it was a self-giving. To that His adversaries bore testimony: — "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." Often as we have read these words, did it ever strike us, — and, if not, does it not bring a flash of surprise when we perceive it, — that these words, meant as taunt, were really the noblest panegyric, a higher testimony and more adequate far than even that of the centurion? "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." The first clause contained the answer to the second — "Himself He cannot save!" How *could* He, having saved

others? How can any keep what he gives? How can any live for self, when he is living for others? Unconsciously, those enemies were enunciating the very principle of Christianity, the grand law of all existence, that only by losing self you can save others; that only by giving life you can bless. Love gives itself. The mother spends herself in giving life to her child; the soldier, for his country; nay, even the artist produces nothing destined for immortality, nothing that will *live*, except so far as he has forgotten himself, and merged his very being in his work.

"He saved others; Himself He cannot save." That was the love of Christ. Now, to descend to particulars.

That spirit of self-giving manifests itself in the shape of considerate kindliness. Take three cases:—First, that in which He fed the people with bread. "I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat." There was a tenderness which, not absorbed in His own great designs, considered a number of small particulars of their state—imagined, provided; and this for the satisfaction of the lowest wants. Again, to the disciples: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while." He would not over-work them in the sublimest service. He did not grudge from duty their interval of relaxation; He even tenderly enforced it. Lastly, His dying words: "Behold thy mother! Woman, behold thy son!" Short sentences. He was too exhausted to say more. But in that hour of death-torture He could think of her desolate state when He was gone, and, with delicate, thoughtful attention, provide for her well-being.

There are people who would do great acts; but, because they wait for great opportunities, life passes, and the acts of love are not done at all. Observe, this considerateness of Christ was shown in little things. And such are the parts of human life. Opportunities for doing *greatly* seldom occur — life is made up of infinitesimals. If you compute the sum of happiness in any given day, you will find that it was composed of small attentions, — kind looks, which made the heart swell, and stirred into health that sour, rancid film of misanthropy, which is apt to coāgulate on the stream of our inward life, as surely as we live in heart apart from our fellow-creatures. Doubtless, the memory of each one of us will furnish him with the picture of some member of a family whose very presence seemed to shed happiness: — a daughter, perhaps, whose light step even in the distance irradiated every one's countenance. What was the secret of such a one's power? What had she done? Absolutely nothing; but radiant smiles, beaming good humor, the tact of divining what every one felt and every one wanted, told that she had got out of self, and learned to think for others; so that at one time it showed itself in deprecating the quarrel, which lowering brows and raised tones already showed to be impending, by sweet words; at another, by smoothing an invalid's pillow; at another, by soothing a sobbing child; at another, by humoring and softening a father who had returned weary and ill-tempered from the irritating cares of business. None but she saw those things. None but a loving heart *could* see them.

That was the secret of her heavenly power. Call you those things homely trifles, — too homely for a

sermon? By reference to the character of Christ, they rise into something quite sublime. For that is loving as He loved. And remark, too, these trifles prepare for larger deeds. The one who will be found in trial capable of great acts of love, is ever the one who is always doing considerate small ones. The soul which poured itself out to death upon the cross for the human race, was the spirit of Him who thought of the wants of the people, contrived for the rest of the disciples, and was thoughtful for a mother.

Once again: — It was a love never foiled by the unworthiness of those on whom it had been once bestowed. It was a love which faults, desertion, denial, unfaithfulness, could not chill, even though they wrung His heart. He had chosen; and He trusted. Even in ordinary manhood, that is a finely-tempered heart, one of no ordinary mould, which can say, "It ever was my way, and shall be still, when I do trust a man to trust him wholly." And yet there was everything to shake His trust in humanity. The Pharisees called him Good Master, and were circumventing him all the while. The people shouted hosannas, and three days afterwards were shrieking for his blood. One disciple who had dipped in the same dish, and been trusted with His inmost counsels, betrayed and deceived Him; another was ashamed of Him; three fell asleep while He was preparing for death, — all forsook Him. Yet nothing is more surprising than that unshaken, I had well-nigh said *obstinate*, trust with which He clung to His hopes of our nature, and believed in the face of demonstration.

As we mix in life, there comes, especially to sensitive natures, a temptation to distrust. In young life,

we throw ourselves with unbounded and glorious confidence on such as we think well of, — an error soon corrected; for we soon find out — too soon — that men and women are not what they seem. Then comes disappointment; and the danger is a reäction of desolating and universal mistrust. For, if we look on the doings of man with a merely worldly eye, and pierce below the surface of character, we are apt to feel bitter scorn and disgust for our fellow-creatures. We have lived to see human hollowness; the ashes of the Dead Sea shore; the falseness of what seemed so fair; the mouldering beneath the whited sepulchre: and no wonder if we are tempted to think "friendship *all* a cheat — smiles hypocrisy — words deceit;" and they who are what is called *knowing* in life contract, by degrees, as the result of their experience, a hollow distrust of men, and learn to sneer at apparently good motives. That demoniacal sneer which we have seen — ay, perhaps felt — curling the lip, at times, "Doth Job serve God for naught?"

The only preservative from this withering of the heart is Love. Love is its own perennial fount of strength. The strength of affection is a proof not of the worthiness of the object, but of the largeness of the soul which loves. Love descends, not ascends. The might of a river depends not on the quality of the soil through which it passes, but on the inexhaustibleness and depth of the spring from which it proceeds. The greater mind cleaves to the smaller with more force than the other to it. A parent loves the child more than the child the parent; and partly because the parent's heart is larger, not because the child is worthier. The Saviour loved His disciples infinitely

more than His disciples Him, because His heart was infinitely larger. Love trusts on,—ever hopes and expects better things; and this, a trust springing from itself, and out of its own deeps alone.

And more than this. It is this *trusting* love that makes men what they are trusted to be, so realising itself. Would you make men *trustworthy?* Trust them. Would you make them true? Believe them. This was the real force of that sublime battle-cry which no Englishman hears without emotion. When the crews of the fleet of Britain knew that they were *expected* to do their duty, they *did* their duty. They felt in that spirit-stirring sentence that they were trusted: and the simultaneous cheer that rose from every ship was a forerunner of victory,—the battle was half-won already. They went to serve a country which expected from them great things; and they *did* great things. Those pregnant words raised an enthusiasm for the chieftain who had thrown himself upon his men in trust, which a double line of hostile ships could not appall, nor decks drenched in blood extinguish.

And it is on this principle that Christ wins the hearts of His redeemed. He trusted the doubting Thomas; and Thomas arose with a faith worthy "of his Lord and his God." He would not suffer even the lie of Peter to shake his conviction that Peter might love Him yet; and Peter answered to that sublime forgiveness. His last prayer was extenuation and hope for the race who had rejected Him,—and the kingdoms of the world are become His own. He has loved us, God knows why—I do not; and we, all unworthy though we be, respond faintly to that love, and try to be what He would have us.

Therefore, come what may, hold fast to love. Though men should rend your heart, let them not embitter or harden it. We win by tenderness; we conquer by forgiveness. O, strive to enter into something of that large celestial Charity which is meek, enduring, unretaliating, and which even the overbearing world cannot withstand forever. Learn the new commandment of the Son of God. Not to love, but to love as He loved. Go forth in this spirit to your life-duties; go forth, children of the Cross, to carry everything before you, and win victories for God by the conquering power of a love like His.

XVII.

[Preached June 15, 1851.]

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH TO MEN OF WEALTH.*

1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11.—"And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?"

I HAVE selected this passage for our subject this evening, because it is one of the earliest cases recorded in the Bible in which the interests of the employer and the employed — the man of wealth and the man of work — stood, or seemed to stand, in antagonism to each other.

It was a period in which an old system of things was breaking up, and the new one was not yet established. The patriarchal relationship of tutelage and dependence was gone, and monarchy was not yet in firm existence. Saul was on the throne; but his rule was

* This subject was continued on the following Sunday. By accident, the continuation was omitted from the first edition of Vol. I., and inserted at the beginning of Vol. II. It has been thought better to continue that arrangement, merely drawing attention to the fact, that the conclusion of the subject is to be sought in Vol. II.

irregular and disputed. Many things were slowly growing up into custom which had not yet the force of law; and the first steps by which custom passes into law, from precedent to precedent, are often steps at every one of which struggle and resistance must take place.

The history of the chapter is briefly this. Nabal the wealthy sheep-master, fed his flocks in the pastures of Carmel. David was leader of a band of men who got their living by the sword on the same hills, — outlaws, whose excesses he in some degree restrained, and over whom he retained a leader's influence. A rude, irregular honor was not unknown among those fierce men. They honorably abstained from injuring Nabal's flocks. They did more: they protected them from all harm against the marauders of the neighborhood. By the confession of Nabal's own herdsmen, "they were a wall unto them both by night and day, all the time they were with them keeping their flocks."

And thus a kind of Right grew up, — irregular enough, but sufficient to establish a claim on Nabal for remuneration of these services; a new claim, not admitted by him; reckoned by him an exaction, which could be enforced by no law, only by that law which is above all statute-law, deciding according to emergencies — an indefinable, instinctive sense of Fairness and Justice. But as there was no law, and each man was to himself a law, and the sole arbiter of his own rights, what help was there but that disputes should rise between the wealthy proprietors and their self-constituted champions, with exaction and tyranny on the one side, churlishness and parsimony on the

other? Hence a fruitful and ever fresh source of struggle: the one class struggling to take as much, and the other to give as little, as possible. In modern language, the Rights of Labor were in conflict with the Rights of Property.

The story proceeds thus: — David presented a demand, moderate and courteous enough (v. 6, 7, 8). It was refused by Nabal, and added to the refusal were those insulting taunts of low birth and outcast condition which are worse than injury, and sting, making men's blood run fire. One court of appeal was left. There remained nothing but the trial by Force. "Gird ye on," said David, "every man his sword."

Now, observe the fearful, hopeless character of this struggle. The question had come to this: whether David, with his ferocious, needy six hundred mountaineers, united by the sense of wrong, or Nabal, with his well-fed and trained hirelings, bound by interest to his cause, not love, were stronger? Which was the more powerful, want whetted by insult, or selfishness pampered by abundance? — they who wished to keep by force, or they who wished to take? An awful and uncertain spectacle; but the spectacle which is exhibited in every country where Rights are keenly felt and Duties lightly — where insolent demand is met by insulting defiance. Wherever classes are held apart by rivalry and selfishness, instead of drawn together by the Law of Love, — wherever there has not been established a kingdom of heaven, but only a kingdom of the world, — there exists the forces of inevitable collision.

I. The causes of this false social state.
II. The message of the Church to the man of wealth.

I. False basis on which social superiority was held to rest.

Throughout, Nabal's conduct was built upon the assumption of his own superiority. He was a man of wealth. David was dependent on his own daily efforts. Was not that enough to settle the question of superiority and inferiority? It was enough on both sides for a long time, till the falsehood of the assumption became palpable and intolerable. But palpable and intolerable it did become, at last.

A social falsehood will be borne long, even with considerable inconvenience, until it forces itself obtrusively on men's attention, and can be endured no longer. The exact point at which *this* social falsehood, that wealth constitutes superiority, and has a right to the subordination of inferiors, becomes intolerable, varies according to several circumstances.

The evils of poverty are comparative. They depend on climate. In warm climates, where little food, no fuel, and scanty shelter, are required, the sting is scarcely felt till poverty becomes starvation. They depend on contrast. Far above the point where poverty becomes actual famine, it may become unbearable if contrasted strongly with the unnecessary luxury and abundance enjoyed by the classes above. Where all suffer equally, as men and officers suffer in an Arctic voyage, men bear hardship with cheerfulness; but where suffering weighs heavily on some, and the luxury of enjoyment is out of all proportion monopolized by a few, the point of reäction is reached long before

penury has become actual want; or, again, when wealth or rank assumes an insulting, domineering character,—when contemptuous names for the poor are invented, and current among the more unfeeling of a wealthy class,—then the falsehood of superiority can be tolerated no longer; for we do not envy honors which are meekly borne, nor wealth which is unostentatious.

Now, it was this which brought matters to a crisis. David had borne poverty long—nay, he and his men had long endured the contrast between their own cavern-homes and beds upon the rock, and Nabal's comforts. But when Nabal added to this those pungent, biting sneers, which sink into poor men's hearts and rankle,—which are not forgotten, but come out fresh in the day of retribution,—"Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master,"—then David began to measure himself with Nabal,—not a wiser man, nor a better, nor even a stronger. Who is this Nabal? Intellectually, a fool; morally, a profligate—drowning reason in excess of wine at the annual sheep-shearing. A tyrant over his slaves—overbearing to men who only ask of him their rights. Then rose the question, which Nabal had better not have forced men to answer for themselves, By what right does this possessor of wealth lord it over men who are inferior in no one particular?

Now, observe two things.

1. An apparent inconsistency in David's conduct. David had received injury after injury from Saul, and only forgiven. One from Nabal, and David is striding over the hills to revenge his wrong with naked steel.

How came this reverence and irreverence to mix together?

We reply: Saul had a claim of Authority on David's allegiance; Nabal, only one of rank. Between these the Bible makes a vast difference. It says, The *powers* which be are ordained of God. But upper and lower, as belonging to difference in property, are fictitious terms: true, if character corresponds with titular superiority; false, if it does not. And such was the difference manifested in the life of the Son of God. To lawful authority, whether Roman or Jewish, even priestly, He paid deference; but to the titled mark of conventional distinction, none. Rabbi, Rabbi, was no Divine authority. It was not power, a delegated attribute of God; it was only a name. In Saul, therefore, David reverenced one his superior in authority; but in Nabal he only had one surpassing him in wealth. And David refused, somewhat too rudely, to acknowledge the bad, great man as his superior; would pay him no reverence, respect, or allegiance whatever. Let us mark that distinction well, so often confused. Kings, masters, parents, — here is a power ordained of God. Honor it. But wealth, name, title, distinctions, always fictitious, often false and vicious, — if you claim homage for these, separate from worth, you confound two things essentially different. Try that by the test of His Life. Name the text where Christ claimed reverence for wealth or rank. On the Mount did the Son of Man bow the knee to the majesty of wealth and wrong, or was His Sonship shown in that He would not bow down to that as if of God?

2. This great falsehood, respecting superior and inferior, rested on a truth. There had been a superi-

ority in the wealthy class once. In the patriarchal system, wealth and rule had gone together. The father of the family and tribe was the one in whom proprietorship was centred. But the patriarchal system had passed away. Men like Nabal succeeded to the patriarchs' wealth, and expected the subordination which had been yielded to patriarchal character and position; and this when every particular of relationship was altered. Once, the patriarch was the protector of his dependants. Now, David's class was independent, and the protectors rather than the protected, — at all events, able to defend themselves. Once, the rich man was the ruler in virtue of paternal relationship. Now, wealth was severed from rule and relationship; a man might be rich, yet neither a ruler, nor a protector, nor a kinsman. And the fallacy of Nabal's expectations consisted in this, that he demanded for wealth that reverence which had once been due to men who happened to be wealthy.

It is a fallacy in which we are perpetually entangled. We expect reverence for that which was once a symbol of what was reverenced, but is reverenced no longer. Here, in England, it is common to complain that there is no longer any respect of inferiors towards superiors; that servants were once devoted and grateful, tenants submissive, subjects enthusiastically loyal. But we forget that servants were once protected by their masters, and tenants safe from wrong only through the guardianship of their powerful lords; that thence a personal gratitude grew up: that now they are protected by the law from wrong by a different social system altogether; and that the individual bond of gratitude subsists no longer. We

expect that to masters and employers the same reverence and devotedness shall be rendered which were due to them under other circumstances, and for different reasons: as if wealth and rank had ever been the claim to reverence, and not merely the accidents and accompaniments of the claim; as if anything less sacred than holy ties could purchase sacred feelings; as if the homage of free manhood could be due to gold and name; as if to the mere Nabal-fool who is labelled as worth so much, and whose signature carries with it so much coin, the holiest and most ennobling sensations of the soul, reverence and loyalty, were due by God's appointment.

No. That patriarchal system has passed forever. No sentimental wailings for the past, no fond regrets for the virtues of a bygone age, no melancholy, poetical, retrospective antiquarianism, can restore it. In church and state the past *is* past: and you can no more bring back the blind reverence than the rude virtues of those days. The day has come in which, if feudal loyalty or patriarchal reverence are to be commanded, they must be won by patriarchal virtues, or feudal real superiorities.

II. Cause of this unhealthy social state: A false conception respecting Rights.

It would be unjust to Nabal to represent this as an act of wilful oppression and conscious injustice. He did what appeared to him fair between man and man. He paid his laborers. Why should he pay anything beyond stipulated wages?

David's demand appeared an extravagant and insolent one, provoking unfeigned astonishment and indignation.

It was an invasion of his rights. It was a dictation with respect to the employment of that which was his own. "Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?"

Recollect, too, there was something to be said for Nabal. This view of the irresponsible right of property was not *his* invention. It was the view probably entertained by all his class. It had descended to him from his parents. They were prescriptive and admitted rights on which he stood. And, however false or unjust a prescriptive right may be, however baseless when examined, there is much excuse for those who have inherited and not invented it; for it is hard to see through the falsehood of any system by which we profit, and which is upheld by general consent, especially when good men, too, uphold it. Rare, indeed, is that pure-heartedness which sees, with eagle glance, through conventionalism — This is a wrong, and I and my own class are the doers of it.

On the other hand, David and his needy followers were not slow to perceive that they had their rights over that property of Nabal's.

Men on whom wrongs press are the first to feel them, and their cries of pain and indignation are the appointed means of God to direct to their wrongs the attention of society. Very often the fierce and maddened shriek of suffering is the first intimation that a wrong exists at all.

There was no law in Israel to establish David's claims. This guardianship of Nabal's flocks was partly a self-constituted thing. No bargain had been made — no sum of reward expressly stipulated. But there is

a Law besides and above all written law, which gives to written laws their authority, and from which, so often as they diverge, it is woe to the framers of the law; for their law must perish, and the Eternal Law unseen will get itself acknowledged as a truth from heaven, or a truth from hell, — a truth begirt with fire and sword, if they will not read it except so.

In point of fact, David had a right to a share of Nabal's profits. The harvest was in part David's harvest, for without David it never could have been reaped. The sheep were in part David's sheep, for without David not a sheep would have been spared by the marauders of the hills. Not a sheaf of corn was carried to Nabal's barn, nor a night passed in repose by Nabal's shepherds, but what told of the share of David in the saving of that sheaf, and the procurement of that repose (not the less real because it was past and unseen). The right which the soldier has by law to his pay was the right which David had by unwritten law, — a right resting on the fact that his services were indispensable for the harvest.

Here, then, is one of the earliest instances of the Rights of Labor coming into collision with the Rights of Property — rights shadowy, undefined, perpetually shifting their boundaries, varying with every case, altering with every age, incapable of being adjusted except rudely by law, and leaving always something which the most subtle and elaborate law cannot define, and which in any moment may grow up into a wrong.

Now, when it comes to this, — Rights against Rights, — there is no determination of the question but by overwhelming numbers or blood. David's remedy was a short, sharp, decisive one: — "Gird ye on every man

his sword." And it is difficult, for the sake of humanity, to say to which side in such a quarrel we should wish well. If the rich man succeeds in civil war, he will bind the chain of degradation more severely and more surely for years or ages on the crushed serf. If the champions of popular rights succeed by the sword, you may then await, in awe, the reign of tyranny, licentiousness, and lawlessness. For the victory of the lawless, with the memory of past wrongs to avenge, is almost always more sanguinary than the victory of those who have had power long, and whose power has been defied.

3. We find another cause in circumstances. Want and unjust exclusion precipitated David and his men into this rebellion. It is common enough to lay too much weight on circumstances. Nothing can be more false than the popular theory that ameliorated outward condition is the panacea for the evils of Society. The Gospel principle begins from within, and works outwards. The world's principle begins with the outward condition, and expects to influence inwardly. To expect that by changing the world without, in order to suit the world within, by taking away all difficulties, and removing all temptations, instead of hardening the man within against the force of outward temptation, — to adapt the lot to the man, instead of moulding the spirit to the lot, is to reverse the Gospel method of procedure. Nevertheless, even that favorite speculation of theorists, that perfect circumstances will produce perfect character, contains a truth. Circumstances of outward condition are not the sole efficients in the production of character, but they are efficients which must not be ignored. Favorable con-

dition will not produce excellence; but the want of it often hinders excellence. It is true that vice leads to poverty, — all the moralizers tell us that, — but it is also true that poverty leads to vice. There are some in this world to whom, speaking humanly, social injustice and social inequalities have made goodness impossible. Take, for instance, the case of these bandits on Mount Carmel. Some of them were outlawed by their own crimes; but others, doubtless, by debts not wilfully contracted, — one, at least, David, by a most unjust and unrighteous persecution. And these men, excluded, needy, exasperated by a sense of wrong, untaught outcasts, — could you gravely expect from them obedience, patience, meekness, religious resignation? Yes, my brethren, that is exactly the marvellous impossibility people do most inconsistently expect; and there are no bounds to our astonishment if we do not get what we expect: — superhuman honesty from starving men, to whom life, by hopelessness, has become a gambler's desperate chance; chivalrous loyalty and high forbearance from creatures to whom the order of society has presented itself only as an unjust system of partiality. We forget that forbearance and obedience are the very last and highest lessons learned by the spirit in its most careful training. By those unhallowed conventionalisms through which we, like heathens, and not like Christians, crush the small offender and court the great one, — that damnable cowardice by which we banish the seduced, and half admire the seducer; by which, in defiance of all manliness and all generosity, we punish the weak and tempted, and let the tempter go free: — by all these we make men and women outcasts, and then expect

from them the sublimest graces of reverence and resignation.

II. The message of the Church to the man of wealth.

The message of the Church contains those principles of Life which, carried out, would, and hereafter will, realize the Divine Order of Society. The revealed Message does not create the facts of our humanity: it simply makes them known. The Gospel did not make God our Father: it authoritatively reveals that He is so. It did not create a new duty of loving one another: it revealed the old duty which existed from eternity, and must exist as long as humanity is humanity. It was "no new commandment," but an old commandment which had been heard from the beginning. The Church of God is that living body of men who are called by Him out of the world, not to be the inventors of a new social system, but to exhibit in the world, by word and life,—chiefly by life,—what humanity is, was, and will be, in the Idea of God. Now, so far as the social economy is concerned, the revelations of the Church will coïncide with the discoveries of a Scientific Political Economy. Political Economy discovers slowly the facts of the immutable laws of social well-being. But the living principles of those laws, which cause them to be obeyed, Christianity has revealed to loving hearts long before. The spirit discovers them to the spirit. For instance, Political Economy, gazing on such a fact as this of civil war, would arrive at the same principles which the Church arrives at. She, too, would say, Not selfishness, but love. Only that she arrives at these principles by experience, not intuition; by terrible lessons, not

revelation; by revolutions, wars, and famines, not by spiritual impulses of charity.

And so, because these principles were eternally true in humanity, we find in the conduct of Abigail towards David, in this early age, not explicitly, but implicitly, the very principles which the Church of Christ has given to the world; and, more, the very principles which a sound economy would sanction. In her reply to David we have the anticipation, by a loving heart, of those duties which selfish prudence must have taught at last.

1. The spiritual dignity of man as man. Recollect David was the poor man; but Abigail, the high-born lady, admits his worth: "The Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days." Here is a truth revealed to that age. Nabal's day, and the day of such as Nabal, is past; another power is rising above the horizon. David's cause is God's cause. Worth does not mean what a man is worth,—you must find some better definition than that.

Now, this is the very truth revealed in the Incarnation. David, Israel's model king,—the king by the grace of God, not by the conventional rules of human choice,—is a shepherd's son. Christ, the king who is to reign over our regenerated humanity, is humbly born—the poor woman's Son. That is the Church's message to the man of wealth; and a message which, it seems, has to be learned afresh in every age. It was new to Nabal. It was new to the men of the age of Christ. In His day they were offended in Him, because He was humbly born. "Is not this the car-

penter's son?" It is the offence now. They who retain those superstitious ideas of the eternal superiority of rank and wealth have the first principles of the Gospel yet to learn. How can they believe in the Son of Mary? They may honor Him with the lip: they deny Him in His brethren. Whoever helps to keep alive that ancient lie of upper and lower, resting the distinction not on official authority or personal worth, but on wealth and title, is doing his part to hinder the establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Now, the Church of Christ proclaims that truth in baptism. She speaks of a kingdom here in which all are, as spirits, equal. She reveals a fact. She does not affect to create the fact. She says, not hypothetically: "This child *may* be the child of God if prevenient grace has taken place, or if hereafter he shall have certain feelings and experiences;" nor, "Hereby I create this child magically, by supernatural power, in one moment, what it was not a moment before;" but she says, authoritatively: I pronounce this child the child of God, the brother of Christ the First-born, the son of Him who has taught us by His Son to call Him *our* Father, not *my* Father. Whatever that child may become hereafter in fact, he is now, by right of creation and redemption, the child of God. Rich or poor, titled or untitled, he shares the spiritual nature of the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven.

2. The second truth expressed by Abigail was the Law of sacrifice. She did not heal the grievance with smooth words. Starving men are not to be pacified by professions of good-will. She brought her two hundred loaves (v. 18), and her two skins of wine, her five sheep ready dressed, &c. A princely provision!

You might have said this was waste — half would have been enough. But the truth is, liberality is a most real economy. She could not stand there calculating the smallest possible expense at which the affront might be wiped out. True economy is to pay liberally and fairly for faithful service. The largest charity is the best economy. Nabal had had a faithful servant. He should have counted no expense too great to retain his services, instead of cheapening and depreciating them. But we wrong Abigail if we call this economy or calculation. In fact, had it been done on economical principles, it would have failed. Ten times this sum from Nabal would not have arrested revenge. For Nabal it was too late. Concessions extracted by fear only provoke exaction further. The poor know well what is given because it must be given, and what is conceded from a sense of justice. They *feel* only what is real. David's men and David felt that these were not the gifts of a sordid calculation, but the offerings of a generous heart. And it won them — their gratitude, their enthusiasm, their unfeigned homage

This is the attractive power of that great Law, whose highest Expression was the Cross. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Say what you will, it is not interest, but the sight of noble qualities and true sacrifice, which commands the devotion of the world. Yea, even the bandit and the outcast will bend before that, as before a Divine thing. In one form or another it draws all men, — it commands all men.

Now, this the Church proclaims as part of its special message to the rich. It says that the Divine Death was a Sacrifice. It declares that death to be the law

of every life which is to be like His. It says that the Law, which alone can interpret the mystery of life, is the self-sacrifice of Christ. It proclaims the law of His life to have been this: "For their sakes I devote (sanctify) Myself, that they also may be devoted through the Truth." In other words, the Self-sacrifice of the Redeemer was to be the living principle and law of the self-devotion of His people. It asserts that to be the principle which alone can make any human life a true life. "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church." We have petrified *that* Sacrifice into a dead theological dogma, about the exact efficacy of which we dispute metaphysically, and charge each other with heresy. That atonement will become a living truth only when we humbly recognize in it the eternal fact that sacrifice is the Law of life. The very mockers at the crucifixion unwittingly declared the principle: — "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." Of course. How could He save Himself who had to save others? You can only save others when you have ceased to think of saving your own soul; you can only bless when you have done with the pursuit of personal happiness. Did you ever hear of a soldier who saved his country by making it his chief work to secure himself? And was the Captain of our salvation to become the Saviour by contravening that universal law of Sacrifice, or by obeying it?

Brother men, the early Church gave expression to that principle of sacrifice in a very touching way. They had all things in common. "Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own." They failed, not because they declared

that, but because men began to think that the duty of sharing was compulsory. They proclaimed principles which were unnatural, inasmuch as they set aside all personal feelings, which are part of our nature too. They virtually compelled private property to cease, because he who retained private property when all were giving up was degraded, and hence became a hypocrite and liar, like Ananias. But let us not lose the truth which they expressed in an exaggerated way: "Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own." Property is sacred. It is *private* property; if it were not, it could not be sacrificed. If it were to be shared equally by the idle and the industrious, there could be no love in giving. Property is the rich man's own. Nabal is right in saying, My bread, my water, my flesh. But there is a higher Right which says, It is not yours. And that voice speaks to every rich man in one way or another, according as he is selfish or unselfish: coming as a voice of terror or a voice of blessing. It came to Nabal with a double curse, turning his heart into stone with the vision of the danger and the armed ranks of David's avengers; and laying on David's soul the sin of intended murder. It came to the heart of Abigail with a double blessing: blessing her who gave and him who took. To the spirit of the Cross alone we look as the Remedy for social evils. When the people of this great country, especially the rich, shall have been touched with the spirit of the Cross to a largeness of sacrifice of which they have not dreamed as yet, there will be an atonement between the Rights of Labor and the Rights of Property.

3. The last part of the Church's message to the man of wealth touches the matter of rightful influence.

Very remarkable is the demeanor of David towards Nabal, as contrasted with his demeanor towards Abigail. In the one case, defiance, and a haughty self-assertion of equality: in the other, deference, respect, and the most eloquent benediction. It was not, therefore, against the wealthy class, but against individuals of the class, that the wrath of these men burned.

See, then, the folly and the falsehood of the sentimental regret that there is no longer any reverence felt towards superiors. There *is* reverence to superiors, if only it can be shown that they are superiors. Reverence is deeply rooted in the heart of humanity, — you cannot tear it out. Civilization, science, progress, only change its direction; they do not weaken its force. If it no longer bows before crucifixes and candles, priests and relics, it is not extinguished towards what is truly sacred and what is priestly in man. The fiercest revolt against false authority is only a step towards submission to rightful authority. Emancipation from false lords only sets the heart free to honor true ones. The freeborn David will not do homage to Nabal. Well, now go and mourn over the degenerate age which no longer feels respect for that which is above it. But, behold — David has found a something nobler than himself. Feminine charity — sacrifice and justice — and in gratitude and profoundest respect he bows to that. The state of society which is coming is not one of protection and dependence; nor one of mysterious authority, and blind obedience to it; nor one in which any class shall be privileged by Divine right, and another remain in perpetual tutelage; but it

is one in which unselfish services and personal qualities will command, by Divine right, gratitude and admiration, and secure a true and spiritual leadership.

O! let not the rich misread the signs of the times, or mistake their brethren: they have less and less respect for titles and riches, for vestments and ecclesiastical pretensions; but they have a real respect for superior knowledge and superior goodness; they listen like children to those whom they believe to know a subject better than themselves. Let those who know it say whether there is not something inexpressibly touching, and even humbling, in the large, hearty, manly English reverence and love which the working-men show towards those who love and serve them truly, and save them from themselves and from doing wrong. See how David's feelings gush forth (v. 33)—"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel which sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand."

The rich and the great may have that love, if they will.

To conclude. Doubtless, David was wrong; he had no right even to redress wrongs thus. Patience was his divine appointed duty; and, doubtless, in such circumstances we should be very ready to preach submission, and to blame David. Alas! we, the clergy of the Church of England, have been only too ready to do this: for three long centuries we have taught submission to the powers that be, as if that were the only text in Scripture bearing on the relations between the ruler and the ruled. Rarely have we dared to

demand of the powers that be, justice of the wealthy man, and of the titled, duties. We have produced folios of slavish flattery upon the Divine Right of Power. Shame on us! we have not denounced the wrongs done to weakness: and yet, for one text in the Bible which requires submission and patience from the poor, you will find a hundred which denounce the vices of the rich; — in the writings of the noble old Jewish prophets, that, and almost that only; — that in the Old Testament, with a deep roll of words that sound like Sinai thunders; and that in the New Testament, in words less impassioned and more calmly terrible from the apostles and their Master: — and woe to us, in the great day of God, if we have been the sycophants of the rich, instead of the Redressers of the poor man's wrongs: — woe to us if we have been tutoring David into respect to his superior, Nabal, and forgotten that David's cause, not Nabal's, is the cause of God!

XVIII.

FREEDOM BY THE TRUTH.

John viii. 32. — "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

If these words were the only record we possessed of the Saviour's teaching, it may be they would be insufficient to prove His personal Deity; but they would be enough to demonstrate the Divine Character of His mission.

Observe the greatness of the aim, and the wisdom of the means.

The aim was to make all men free. He saw around Him servitude in every form, — man in slavery to man, and race to race: His own countrymen in bondage to the Romans, — slaves both of Jewish and Roman masters, frightfully oppressed: men trembling before priestcraft; and those who were politically and ecclesiastically free, in worse bondage still, the rich and rulers slaves to their own passions.

Conscious of His inward Deity and of His Father's intentions, He, without hurry, without the excitement which would mark the mere earthly Liberator, calmly said, "Ye shall be free."

See, next, the peculiar wisdom of the means.

The craving for liberty was not new,—it lies deep in human nature. Nor was the promise of satisfying it new. Empirics, charlatans, demagogues, had promised, and men who were not charlatans nor demagogues, in vain.

1. First, they had tried by force. Wherever force has been used on the side of freedom, we honor it; the names which we pronounce in boyhood with enthusiasm are those of the liberators of nations and the vindicators of liberty. Israel had had such: Joshua—the Judges—Judas Maccabæus. Had the Son of God willed so to come, even on human data the success was certain. I waive the truth of His inward Deity; of His miraculous power; of His power to summon to His will more than twelve legions of angels. I only notice now that men's hearts were full of Him; ripe for revolt; and that at a single word of His, thrice three hundred thousand swords would have started from their scabbards.

But had He so come, one nation might have gained liberty; not the race of man: moreover, the liberty would only have been independence of a foreign conqueror.

Therefore as a conquering king He did not come.

2. Again, it might have been attempted by a legislative enactment. Perhaps only once has this been done successfully, and by a single effort. When the names of conquerors shall have been forgotten, and modern civilization shall have become obsolete,—when England's shall be ancient history, one act of hers will be remembered as a record of her greatness: that act by which in costly sacrifice she emancipated her slaves.

But one thing England could not do. She could give freedom — she could not fit for freedom, not make it lasting. The stroke of a monarch's pen will do the one — the discipline of ages is needed for the other. Give to-morrow a constitution to some feeble Eastern nation, or a horde of savages, and in half a century they will be subjected again.

Therefore the Son of Man did not come to free the world by legislation.

3. It might be done by civilization. Civilization does free — intellect equalizes. Every step of civilization is a victory over some lower instinct. But civilization contains within itself the elements of a fresh servitude. Man conquers the powers of nature, and becomes in turn their slave. The workman is in bondage to the machinery which does his will, — his hours, his wages, his personal habits, determined by it. The rich man fills his house with luxuries, and cannot do without them. A highly-civilized community is a very spectacle of servitude. Man is there a slave to dress, to hours, to manners, to conventions, to etiquette. Things contrived to make his life more easy become his masters.

Therefore Jesus did not talk of the progress of the species, nor the growth of civilization. He did not trust the world's hope of liberty to a right division of property. But he freed the inner man, that so the outer might become free too. "Ye shall know the truth, and the *truth* shall make you free."

I. The truth that liberates.
II. The liberty which truth gives.

The truth which Christ taught was chiefly on these three points: God — Man — Immortality.

1. God. Blot out the thought of God, a Living Person, and life becomes mean, existence unmeaning, the universe dark; and resolve is left without a stay, aspiration and duty without a support.

The Son exhibited God as Love; and so that fearful bondage of the mind to the necessity of Fate was broken. A living Lord had made the world; and its dark and unintelligible mystery meant good, not evil. He manifested Him as a spirit; and if so, the only worship that could please Him must be a spirit's worship. Not by sacrifices is God pleased; nor by droned litanies and liturgies; nor by fawning and flattery; nor is His wrath bought off by blood. Thus was the chain of superstition rent asunder; for superstition is wrong views of God, exaggerated or inadequate, and wrong conceptions of the way to please Him.

And so, when the woman of Samaria brought the conversation to that old ecclesiastical question about consecrated buildings, whether on Mount Gerizim or on Mount Moriah God was the more acceptably adored, He cut the whole controversy short by the enunciation of a single truth: "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

2. Truth respecting man.

We are a mystery to ourselves. Go to any place where the nations have brought together their wealth and their inventions, and before the victories of mind you stand in reverence. Then stop to look at the passing crowds who have attained that civilization.

Think of their low aims, their mean lives, their conformation only a little higher than that of brute creatures, and a painful sense of degradation steals upon you. So great, and yet so mean! And so of individuals. There is not one here whose feelings have not been deeper than we can fathom; nor one who would venture to tell out to his brother man the mean, base thoughts that have crossed his heart during the last hour. Now, this riddle He solved. He looked on man as fallen, but magnificent in his ruin. We, catching that thought from Him, speak as He spoke. But none that were born of woman ever felt this, or lived this like Him. Beneath the vilest outside he saw that — A human soul, capable of endless growth; and hence He treated with what, for want of a better term, we may call respect, all who approached Him; not because they were titled Rabbis, or rich Pharisees, but because they were men.

Here was a germ for freedom. It is not the shackle on the wrist that constitutes a slave; but the loss of self-respect — to be treated as degraded till he feels degraded — to be subjected to the lash till he believes that he deserves the lash; and liberty is to suspect and yet reverence self; to suspect the tendency which leaves us ever on the brink of fall; to reverence that within us which is allied to God, redeemed by God the Son, and made a temple of the Holy Ghost.

Perhaps we have seen an insect or reptile imprisoned in wood or stone. How it got there is unknown; how the particles of wood in years, or of stone in ages, grew round it, is a mystery; but not a greater mystery than the question of how man became incar-

cerated in evil. At last the day of emancipation came. The axe-stroke was given; and the light came in, and the warmth; and the gauze wings expanded, and the eye looked bright; and the living Thing stepped forth, and you saw that there was not its home. Its home was the free air of heaven.

Christ taught that truth of the human soul. It is not in its right place. It never is in its right place in the dark prison-house of sin. Its home is freedom, and the breath of God's life.

3. Truth respecting immortality.

He taught that this life is not all; that it is only a miserable state of human infancy. He taught that in words; by His life, and by His Resurrection.

This, again, was freedom. If there be a faith that cramps and enslaves the soul, it is the idea that this life is all. If there be one that expands and elevates, it is the thought of immortality; and this, observe, is something quite distinct from the selfish desire of happiness. It is not to enjoy, but to be, that we long for — to enter into more and higher life; a craving which we can only part with when we sink below humanity, and forfeit it.

This was the martyrs' strength. They were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might attain a better Resurrection. In that hope, and the knowledge of that truth, they were free from the fear of pain and death.

II. The nature of the liberty which truth gives.

1. Political freedom.

It was our work, last Sunday, to show that Christianity does not directly interfere with political ques-

tions. But we should have only half done our work, if we had not also learned that, mediately and indirectly, it must influence them. Christ's Gospel did not promise political freedom, yet it gave it: more surely than conqueror, reformer, patriot, that Gospel will bring about a true liberty at last.

This, not by theories nor by schemes of constitutions, but by the revelations of Truths. God, a Spirit; man, His child, redeemed and sanctified. Before that spiritual equality, all distinctions between peer and peasant, monarch and laborer, privileged and unprivileged, vanish. A better man or a wiser man than I is in my presence, and I feel it a mockery to be reminded that I am his superior in rank.

Let us hold that truth; let us never weary of proclaiming it; and the truth shall make us free at last.

2. Mental independence.

Slavery is that which cramps powers. The worst slavery is that which cramps the noblest powers. Worse therefore than he who manacles the hands and feet is he who puts fetters on the mind, and pretends to demand that men shall think, and believe, and feel, thus and thus, because others so believed, and thought, and felt, before.

In Judea, life was become a set of forms, and religion a congeries of traditions. One living word from the lips of Christ, and the mind of the world was free.

Later, a mountain mass of superstition had gathered round the Church, atom by atom, and grain by grain. Men said that the soul was saved by doing and believing what the priesthood taught. The heroes of the Reformation spoke. They said the soul of man is

saved by the grace of God: a more credible hypothesis. Once more the mind of the world was free — and free by truth.

There is a tendency always to think, in the masses; not what is true, but what is respectable, correct, orthodox, authorized, — that we ask. It comes partly from cowardice; partly from indolence, from habit, from imitation; from the uncertainty and darkness of all moral truths, and the dread of timid minds to plunge into the investigation of them. Now, truth known and believed respecting God and man frees from this, by warning of individual responsibility. But responsibility is personal. It cannot be delegated to another, and thrown off upon a church. Before God, face to face, each soul must stand, to give account.

Do not, however, confound mental independence with mental pride. It may, it ought to coëxist with the deepest humility. For that mind alone is free which, conscious ever of its own feebleness, feeling hourly its own liability to err, turning thankfully to light, from whatever side it may come, does yet refuse to give up that right with which God has invested it, or to abrogate its own responsibility; and so, humbly, and even awfully, resolves to have an opinion, a judgment, a decision, of its own.

3. Superiority to temptation.

It is not enough to define the liberty which Christ promises as freedom from sin. Many circumstances will exempt from sin which do not yet confer that liberty "where the Spirit of the Lord is." Childhood, paralysis, ill-health, the impotence of old age, may remove the capacity and even the desire of trans-

gression; but the child, the paralytic, the old man, are not free through the truth.

Therefore, to this definition we must add, that one whom Christ liberates is free by his own will. It is not that he would, and cannot; but that he can, and will not. Christian liberty is right will, sustained by love, and made firm by faith in Christ.

This may be seen by considering the opposite of liberty — moral bondage. Go to the intemperate man in the morning, when his head aches, his hand trembles, his throat burns, and his whole frame is relaxed and unstrung: he is ashamed, hates his sin, would not do it. Go to him at night, when the power of habit is on him like a spell, and he obeys the mastery of his craving. He can use the language of Rom. vii.: "That which he would, he does not; but the evil that he hates, that does he." Observe, he is not in possession of a true self. It is not he, but sin which dwelleth in him, that does it. A power which is not himself, which is not he, commands him against himself. And that is Slavery.

This is a gross case, but in every more refined instance the slavery is just as real. Wherever a man would and cannot, there is servitude. He may be unable to control his expenditure, to rouse his indolence, to check his imagination. Well, he is not free. He may boast, as the Jews did, that he is Abraham's son, or any other great man's son; that he belongs to a free country; that he never was in bondage to any man: but free in the freedom of the Son he is not.

4. Superiority to fear.

Fear enslaves, courage liberates — and that always. Whatever a man intensely dreads, that brings him into

bondage, if it be above the fear of God, and the reverence of duty. The apprehension of pain, the fear of death, the dread of the world's laugh, of poverty, or the loss of reputation, enslaves alike.

From such fear Christ frees, and through the power of the truths I have spoken. He who lives in the habitual contemplation of immortality cannot be in bondage to time, or enslaved by transitory temptations. I do not say, will not. "He *cannot* sin," saith the Scripture, while that faith is living. He who feels his soul's dignity, knowing what he is, and who, redeemed by God the Son, and freed by God the Spirit, cannot cringe, nor pollute himself, nor be mean. He who aspires to gaze undazzled on the intolerable brightness of that One before whom Israel veiled their faces, will scarcely quail before any earthly fear.

This is not picture-painting. This is not declamation. These are things that have been. There have been men on this earth of God's, of whom it was simply true that it was easier to turn the sun from its course than them from the paths of honor. There have been men like John the Baptist, who could speak the truth which had made their own spirits free, with the axe above their neck. There have been men, redeemed in their inmost being by Christ, on whom tyrants and mobs have done their worst; but when, like Stephen, the stones crashed in upon their brain, or when their flesh hissed and crackled in the flames, were calmly superior to it all. The power of evil had laid its shackles on the flesh; but the mind, and the soul, and the heart, were free.

We conclude with two inferences:

1. To cultivate the love of truth. I do not mean veracity; that is another thing. Veracity is the correspondence between a proposition and a man's belief. Truth is the correspondence of the proposition with fact. The love of truth is the love of realities: the determination to rest upon facts, and not on semblances. Take an illustration of the way in which the habit of cultivating truth is got. Two boys see a misshapen, hideous object, in the dark. One goes up to the cause of his terror, examines it, learns what it is: he knows the truth, and the truth has made him free. The other leaves it in mystery and unexplained vagueness, and is a slave for life to superstitions and indefinite terrors. Romance, prettiness, "dim religious lights," awe and mystery — these are not the atmosphere of Christ's Gospel of liberty. Base the heart on facts. The truth alone can make you free.

2. See what a Christian is. Our society is divided into two classes. Those who are daring, inquisitive, but restrained by no reverence, and kept back by little religion. Those who may be called religious: but, with all their excellences, we cannot help feeling that the elements of their character are feminine rather than masculine, and that they have no grasp or manly breadth, and hold on feeling rather than on truth.

Now, see what a Christian is, drawn by the hand of Christ. He is a man on whose clear and open brow God has set the stamp of truth; one whose very eye beams bright with honor; in whose very look and bearing you may see freedom, manliness, veracity: a brave man — a noble man — frank, generous, true; with, it may be, many faults: — whose freedom may

take the form of impetuosity or rashness — the form of meanness never. Young Men! if you have been deterred from religion by its apparent feebleness and narrowness, remember — It is a manly thing to be a Christian.

XIX.

THE KINGDOM OF THE TRUTH.

ASSIZE SERMON.

JOHN xviii. 37. — "Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

THE Church is the kingdom of God on earth, and the whole fabric of the Christian Religion rests on the monarchy of Christ. The Hebrew prisoner who stood before the Roman Judge claimed to be the King of men, and eighteen centuries have only verified His claim. There is not a man bearing the Christian name who does not, in one form or another, acknowledge Him to be the Sovereign of his soul.

The question therefore at once suggests itself — On what title does this claim rest?

Besides the title on which the Messiah grounded His pretensions to be the Ruler of a kingdom, three are conceivable. The title of force; the title of prescriptive authority; or the title of incontrovertible reasoning.

Had the Messiah founded His kingdom upon the basis of Force, He would have simply been a rival

of the Cæsars. The imperial power of Rome rested on that Principle. This was all that Pilate meant at first by the question, "Art thou a king?" As a Roman he had no other conception of rule. Right well had Rome fulfilled her mission as the iron kingdom, which was to command by strength, and give to the world the principles of Law. But that kingdom was wasting when these words were spoken. For seven hundred years had the Empire been building itself up. It gave way, at last, and was crumbled into fragments by its own ponderous massiveness. To use the language of the prophet Daniel, miry clay had mixed with the kingdom of iron, and the softer nations which had been absorbed into it broke down its once invincible strength, by corrupting and enervating its citizens: the conquerors of the world dropped the sword from a grasp grown nerveless. The Empire of strength was passing away; for no kingdom founded on force is destined to permanence. "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Before Pontius Pilate, Christ distinctly disclaimed this Right of Force, as the foundation of His sovereignty. "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (v. 36).

The next conceivable basis of a universal kingdom is prescriptive authority. The scribes and priests who waited outside for their victim conceived of such a kingdom. They *had* indeed already an ecclesiastical kingdom which dated back far beyond the origin of Rome. They claimed to rule on a title such as this — "It is written." But neither on this title did the Saviour found his claim. He spoke lightly of institu-

tions which were venerable from age. He contravened opinions which were gray with the hoar of ages. It may be that at times He *defended* Himself on the authority of Moses, by showing that what He taught was not in opposition to Moses; but it is observable that He never rested His claims as a Teacher, or as the Messiah, on that foundation. The scribes fell back on this — "It has been said:" or, "It is written." Christ taught, as the men of His day remarked, on an authority very different from that of the scribes. Not even on His own authority. He did not claim that His words should be recognized because He said them; but because they were true. "If I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me?" Prescription — personal authority — these were not His basis of a kingdom.

One more possible title remains. He might have claimed to rule over men on the ground of incontrovertible demonstration of His principles. This was the ground taken by every philosopher who was the founder of a sect. Apparently, after the failure of his first guess, Pilate thought in the second surmise that this was what Jesus meant by calling Himself a king. When he heard of a kingdom, he thought he had before him a rival of Cæsar; but when truth was named, he seems to have fancied that he was called to try a rival of the philosophers: some new candidate for a system; some new pretender of a truth which was to dethrone its rival systems.

This seems to be implied in the bitter question, "What is Truth?" For the history of opinion in those days was like the history of opinion in our own: religions against religions, philosophies against philosophies; religion and philosophy opposed to one another;

the opinion of to-day dethroned by the opinion of to-morrow; the heterodoxy of this age reckoned the orthodoxy of the succeeding one. And Pilate, feeling the vainness and the presumption of these pretensions, having lived to see failure after failure of systems which pretended to teach That which is, smiled bitterly at the enthusiast who again asserted confidently his claims to have discovered the indiscoverable. There broke from his lips a bitter, half-sarcastic, half-sad exclamation of hopeless scepticism — "What is Truth?"

And, indeed, had the Redeemer claimed this, — to overthrow the doctrine of the Porch and of the Academy, and to enthrone Christianity as a Philosophy of Life upon their ruins by argument, — that sceptical cry would have been not ill-timed.

In these three ways have men attempted the Propagation of the Gospel. By force, when the Church ruled by persecution; by prescriptive authority, when she claimed infallibility, or any modification of infallibility, in the Popery of Rome, or the Popery of the pulpit; by Reasoning, in the age of "evidences," when she only asked to have her proofs brought forward and calmly heard, pledged herself to rule the world by the conviction of the understanding, and laid the foundations of rationalism deep and broad. Let us hear the claim of the King Himself. He rested His royal rights on His testimony to the Truth. "Thou sayest, for I am a king (corrected translation); to this end was I born, to bear witness to the truth." The mode in which the subjects of the kingdom were brought beneath his sway was by assimilation. "Every one that is of the Truth heareth my voice." These, then, are our points:

I. The basis of the kingly rule of Christ.

II. The qualifications of the subjects of the kingdom.

I. The basis of the kingly rule of Christ.

Christ is a king in virtue of His being a witness to the truth. "Thou sayest right. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

Truth is used here in a sense equivalent to reality; — for "truth" substitute reality, and it will become more intelligible. For "the truth" is an ambiguous expression, limited in its application, meaning often nothing more than a theological creed, or a few dogmas of a creed which this or that party have agreed to call "the truth." It would indeed fritter down the majesty of the Redeemer's life, to say that He was a witness for the truth of any number of theological dogmas. Himself, His Life, were a witness to Truth in the sense of Reality. The realities of Life — the realities of the universe — to these his every act and word bore testimony. He was as much a witness to the truth of the purity of domestic life, as to the truth of the doctrine of the Incarnation; to the truth of Goodness being identical with greatness, as much as to the doctrine of the Trinity; and more, — His mind corresponded with Reality as the dial with the sun.

Again, in being a witness to Reality, we are to understand something very much deeper than the statement that He spoke truly. There is a wide difference between truthfulness and mere veracity. Veracity implies a correspondence between words and thoughts· truthfulness, a correspondence between thoughts and

realities. To be veracious, it is only necessary that a man give utterance to his convictions; to be true, it is needful that his convictions have affinity with Fact.

Let us take some illustrations of this distinction. The Prophet tells of men who put sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet; who called good evil, and evil good. yet these were veracious men; for to them evil *was* good, and bitter *was* sweet. There was a correspondence between their opinions and their words: this was veracity. But there was no correspondence between their opinions and eternal Fact: this was untruthfulness. They spoke their opinions truly, but their opinions were not true. The Pharisees in the time of Christ were men of veracity. What they thought they said. They thought that Christ was an impostor. They believed that to tithe mint, anise, and cummin, was as acceptable to God as to be just, and merciful, and true. It was their conviction that they were immeasurably better than publicans and profligates: yet, veracious as they were, the title perpetually affixed to them is, "Ye hypocrites." The life they led, being a false life, is called, in the phraseology of the Apostle John, a lie.

If a man speak a careless slander against another, believing it, he has not sinned against veracity; but the carelessness which has led him into so grave an error effectually bars his claim to clear truthfulness. He is a veracious witness, but not a true one. Or, a man may have taken up second-hand, indolently, religious views — may believe them — defend them vehemently, — Is he a man of truth? Has he bowed before the majesty of truth with that patient, rever-

ential humbleness which is the mark of those who love her?

Imagination has pictured to itself a domain in which every one who enters should be compelled to speak only what he thought, and pleased itself by calling such domain the Palace of Truth. A palace of veracity, if you will; but no temple of the Truth,—a place where every one would be at liberty to utter his own crude unrealities,—to bring forth his delusions, mistakes, half-formed, hasty judgments: where the depraved ear would reckon discord harmony, and the depraved eye mistake color; the depraved moral taste take Herod or Tiberias for a king, and shout beneath the Redeemer's Cross, "Himself He cannot save." A temple of the Truth? Nay, only a palace echoing with veracious falsehoods—a Babel of confused sounds, in which egotism would rival egotism, and truth would be each man's own lie. Far, far more is implied here than the Son of Man spoke veraciously, in saying that He was a Witness to the Truth.

Again, when it is said that He was a Witness to the Truth, it is implied that His very Being, here, *manifested* to the world Divine realities. Human nature is but meant to be a witness to the Divine; the true Humanity is a manifestation, or reflection, of God. And that is Divine Humanity in which the Humanity is a perfect representation of the Divine. "We behold," says the Apostle Paul, "in Christ, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord." And, to borrow and carry on the metaphor, the difference between Christ and other men is this: they are imperfect reflections, He a perfect one, of God.

There are mirrors which are concave, which mag-

nify the thing that they reflect: there are mirrors convex, which diminish it. And we in like manner represent the Divine in a false, distorted way: fragments of truth torn out of connection, snatches of harmony joined without unity. We exaggerate and diminish till all becomes untrue. We bring forth our own fancies, our own idiosyncrasies, our own imaginations, and the image of God can be no longer recognized.

In One alone has the Divine been so blended with the Human, that, as the ocean mirrors every star and every tint of blue upon the sky, so was the earthly Life of Christ the Life of God on earth.

Now, observe that the perfection of Humanity consists in faithful imitation of, or witness borne to, the Mind and Life of God. Whoever has studied and understood the Life of Christ, will have remarked, not without surprise, that the whole principle of His existence was the habit of unceasing imitation. Listen to a few instances of this:

"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but that which He seeth the Father do."—"The words which I speak, I speak not of myself; but the Father which is with me, He doeth the works." Do we remember the strange and startling principle on which He defends His infraction of the literal, legal Sabbath? "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." God the Father works all the Sabbath-day. So may Man, His Son. Do we recollect the ground on which He enforces forgiveness of injuries? A strange ground surely, which would never have occurred except to One whose life was habitual imitation. "Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you, and pray for

which despitefully use you and persecute you; ...may be the children of (that is, resemble) your ... for He sendeth His rain upon the just and the unjust."

This, then, is Man's—this was the Son of Man's—mission to the Truth. Man is but a learner,—a door recipient of a revelation;—here to listen with open ear devoutly for that which he shall hear; to gaze and watch for that which he shall see. Man can do no more. He cannot create Truth: he can only bear witness to it. He has no proud right of private judgment: he can only listen and report that which is in the universe. If he does not repeat and witness to that, he speaketh of his own, and forthwith ceaseth to be true. He is a liar, and the *father* of it, because he creates it. Each man in his vocation is in the world to do this. As truly as it was said by Christ, may it be said by each of us, even by those from whose trades and professions it seems most alien, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the Truth."

The architect is here to be a witness. He succeeds only so far as he is a witness, and a true one. The lines and curves, the acanthus on his column, the proportions, all are successful and beautiful only so far as they are true; the report of an eye which has lain open to God's world. If he build his lighthouse to resist the storm, the law of imitation bids him build it after the shape of the spreading oak, which has defied the tempest. If man construct the ship which is to cleave the waters, calculation or imitation builds it on the model upon which the Eternal Wisdom has already constructed the fish's form. The artist is a

witness to the truth; or he will never attain the beautiful. So is the agriculturist; or he will never reap a harvest. So is the statesman — building up a nation's polity on the principles which time has proved true — or else all his work crumbles down in revolution: for national revolution is only the Divine Rejection, stamped on the social falsehood, which cannot stand. In every department of life, man must work truly — as a witness. He is born for that — nothing else; and nothing else can he do. Man, the Son, can do nothing of Himself, but that which He seeth God, the Father, do.

This was the Saviour's title to be a King; and His kingdom formed itself upon this law: "Every one that is of the Truth heareth my voice;" that Eternal law which makes Truth assimilate all that is congenial to itself. Truth is like life; whatever lives absorbs into itself all that is congenial. The leaf that trembles in the wind assimilates the light of heaven to make its color and the sap of the parent stem — innumerable influences from heaven, and earth, and air, to make up its beautiful being.

So grew the Church of Christ; round Him as a centre, attracted by the truth, all that had in it harmony with His Divine Life and words grew to Him (by gradual accretions); clung to Him as the iron to the magnet. All that were of His Spirit believed; all that had in them the spirit of sacrifice were attracted to His Cross. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

He taught not by elaborate trains of argument, like a scribe or a philosopher. He uttered His truths rather as detached intuitions, recognized by intuition,

to be judged only by being felt. For instance — "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." — "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you." Prove that — by force, by authority, by argument — you cannot. It suffices that a man reply, "It is not so to me: it is more blessed to receive than it is to give." You have no reply: if he be not of the truth, you cannot make him hear Christ's voice. The truth of Christ is true to the unselfish — a falsehood to the selfish. They that are of the truth, like Him, hear His voice: and if you ask the Christian's proof of the truth of such things, he has no other than this, — It is true to me, as any other intuitive truth is true; equals are equal, because my mind is so constituted that they seem so perforce. Purity is good, because my heart is so made that it feels it to be good.

Brother men, the truer you are, the humbler, the nobler, the more will you feel Christ to be your King. You may be very little able to prove the King's Divine genealogy, or to appreciate those claims to your allegiance which arise out of His Eternal generation; but He will be your Sovereign and your Lord by that affinity of character which compels you to acknowledge His words and life to be Divine. "He that receiveth his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true."

II. We pass to the consideration of the qualification of the subjects of the Empire of the Truth. Who are they that are of the Truth?

1. The first qualification is to *be* true: "He that is

of the truth heareth my voice." Truth lies in character. Christ did not simply *speak* truth: He *was* truth; truth through and through; for truth is a thing, not of words, but of Life and Being. None but a Spirit can be true.

For example. The friends of Job spoke *words* of truth. Scarcely a maxim which they uttered could be impugned: cold, hard, theological verities; but verities out of place — in that place cruel and untrue. Job spoke many words not strictly accurate — hasty, impetuous, blundering, wrong; but the whirlwind came, and before the Voice of God the veracious falsehoods were swept into endless nothingness — the true *man*, wrong, perplexed, in verbal error, stood firm. He was true, though his sentences were not; turned to the truth as the sunflower to the sun, — as the darkened plant, imprisoned in the vault, turns towards the light, — struggling to solve the fearful enigma of his existence.

Job was a servant of the truth, being true in character.

2. The next qualification is integrity. But by integrity I do not mean simply sincerity or honesty; integrity rather according to the meaning of the word as its derivation interprets it — entireness, wholeness, soundness; that which Christ means when he says, "If thine eye be single or sound, thy whole body shall be full of light."

This integrity extends through the entireness or wholeness of the character. It is found in small matters as well as great; for the allegiance of the soul to truth is tested by small things rather than by those which are more important. There is many a man who

would lose his life rather than perjure himself in a court of justice, whose life is yet a tissue of small insincerities. We think that we hate falsehood when we are only hating the consequences of falsehood. We resent hypocrisy, and treachery, and calumny, not because they are untrue, but because they harm us. We hate the false calumny, but we are half pleased with the false praise. It is evidently not the element of untruth here that is displeasing, but the element of harmfulness. Now, he is a man of integrity who hates untruth *as* untruth; who resents the smooth and polished falsehood of society, which does no harm; who turns in indignation from the glittering, whitened lie of sepulchral Pharisaism, which injures no one. Integrity recoils from deceptions which men would almost smile to hear called deception. To a moral, pure mind, the artifices in every department of life are painful: the stained wood, which passes for a more firm and costly material in a building, and deceives the eye, by seeming what it is not, marble; the painting which is intended to be taken for a reality; the gilding which is meant to pass for gold; and the glass which is worn to look like jewels: for there is a moral feeling and a truthfulness in architecture, in painting, and in dress, as well as in the market-place, and in the senate, and in the judgment-hall.

"These are trifles." Yes, these are trifles; but it is just these trifles which go to the formation of character. He that is habituated to deceptions and artificialities in trifles, will try in vain to be true in matters of importance; for truth is a thing of habit rather than of will. You cannot, in any given case, by any sudden and single effort, will to be true, if the habit

of your life has been insincerity. And it is a fearful question, and a difficult one, how all these things, the atmosphere which we breathe in our daily life, may sap the very foundations of the power of becoming a servant of the truth. Life becomes fictitious, and it passes into religion, till our very religion bases itself upon a figment too. We are not righteous, but we expect God to make believe that we are righteous, in virtue of some peculiar doctrines which we hold; and so our very righteousness becomes the fictitious righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, instead of the righteousness which is by faith, the righteousness of those who are the children of the kingdom of the truth.

3. Once more. He is qualified to be the subject of the king who *does* the truth. Christianity joins two things inseparably together — acting truly, and perceiving truly. Every day the eternal nature of that principle becomes more certain. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.

It is a perilous thing to separate feeling from acting; to have learnt to feel rightly without acting rightly. It is a danger to which, in a refined and polished age, we are peculiarly exposed. The romance, the poem, and the sermon, teach us how to feel. Our feelings are delicately correct. But the danger is this: feeling is given to lead to action; if feeling be suffered to awake without passing into duty, the character becomes untrue. When the emergency for real action comes, the feeling is, as usual, produced: but, accustomed as it is to rise in fictitious circumstances without action, neither will it lead on to action in the real ones. "We pity wretchedness, and shun the

wretched." We utter sentiments just, honorable refined, lofty, — but, somehow, when a truth presents itself in the shape of a duty, we are unable to perform it. And so such characters become by degrees like the artificial pleasure-grounds of bad taste, in which the waterfall does not fall, and the grotto offers only the refreshment of an imaginary shade, and the green hill does not strike the skies, and the tree does not grow. Their lives are a sugared crust of sweetness trembling over black depths of hollowness; more truly still, "whited sepulchres," — fair without to look upon, "within full of all uncleanness."

It is perilous, again, to separate thinking rightly from acting. He is already half false who speculates on truth, and does not do it. Truth is given, not to be contemplated, but to be done. Life is an action, not a thought; and the penalty paid by him who speculates on truth is that by degrees the very truth he holds becomes to him a falsehood.

There is no truthfulness, therefore, except in the witness borne to God by doing His will, — to live the truths we hold, or else they will be no truths at all. It was thus that He witnessed the truth. He lived it. He spoke no touching truths for sentiment to dwell on, or thought to speculate upon. Truth with Him was a matter of life and death. He perilled His life upon the words He said. If He were true, the life of men was a painted life, and the woes He denounced unflinchingly would fall upon the Pharisees. But if *they* were true, or even strong, His portion in this life was the Cross.

Who is a true man? He who does the truth; and never holds a principle on which he is not prepared in

any hour to act, and in any hour to risk the consequences of holding it.

I make, in conclusion, one remark. The kingly character of truth is exhibited strikingly in the calmness of the bearing of the Son of Man before His judge. Veracity is not necessarily dignified. There is a vulgar effrontery, — a spirit of defiance which taunts, and braves, and challenges condemnation. It marks the man who is conscious of sincerity, but of nothing higher, — whose confidence is in himself and his own honesty, and who is absorbed in the feeling, "I speak the truth, and am a martyr." Again, the man of mere veracity is often violent, for what he says rests upon his own assertion; and vehemence of assertion is the only addition he can make to it. Such was the violence of Paul before Ananias. He was indignant at the injustice of being smitten contrary to the law; and the powerlessness of his position, the hopelessness of address, joined to a conviction of the truth of what he said, produced that vehemence.

It has been often remarked that there is a great difference between theological and scientific controversy. Theologians are proverbially vituperative: because it is a question of veracity — the truth of their views, their moral perceptions, their intellectual acumen. There exists no test but argument on which they can fall back. If argument fails, all fails. But the man of science stands calmly on the facts of the universe. He is based upon reality. All the opposition and controversy in the world cannot alter facts, nor prevent the facts being manifest at last. He can be calm, because he is a witness for the Truth.

In the same way, but in a sense far deeper and more sacred, the Son of Man stood *calm*, rooted in the Truth. There was none of the egotism of self conscious veracity in those placid, confident, dignified replies. This was not the feeling, — "I hold the truth," — but "I am a witness to the truth." They might spit upon Him — kill Him — crucify Him — give His ashes to the winds: — they could not alter the Truth by which He stood. Was not that His own feeling? "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

There was the kingly dignity of One who, in Life and Death, stood firm on Truth as on a Rock.

In the name of Christ, I respectfully commend these thoughts, for the special consideration of the present week, to those who will be pledged by oath to witness to the whole truth they know, and nothing but the truth: to those who, permitted by the merciful spirit of English jurisprudence to watch that their client, if condemned, shall be condemned only according to the law, are yet not justified by the spirit of the life of Christ in falsifying or obscuring facts; and who, owing a high duty to a client, owe one yet higher to the truth: and, lastly, to those whom the severe intellectual, and, much more, moral training of the English bar has qualified for the high office of disentangling truth from the mazes of conflicting testimony.

From the trial-hour of Christ, from the Cross of the Son of God, there arises the principle to which all His life bore witness: that the first lesson of Christian life is this, Be true; and the second this, Be true; and the third this, Be true.

XX.

[Preached November 7, 1852.]

THE SCEPTICISM OF PILATE.

John xviii. 38. — "Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?"

The lesson which we are to draw from this verse must depend upon the view we take of the spirit in which the words were spoken. Some of the best commentators conceive them to have been words of mockery; and such is the great Lord Bacon's view. "'What is Truth?' said jesting Pilate, and would not wait for a reply."

In all deference to such authority, we cannot believe that this sentence was spoken in jest. In Pilate's whole conduct there is no trace of such a tone. It betrays throughout much of uncertainty, nothing of lightness. He was cruelly tormented with the perplexity of efforts to save his prisoner. He risked his own reputation. He pronounced Him, almost with vehemence, innocent. He even felt awe, and was afraid of Him. In such a frame of mind, mockery was impossible.

Let us try to comprehend the character of the man who asked this question. His character will help us to judge the tone in which he asked. And his char-

acter, the character of his mind and life, are clear enough from the few things recorded of him. He first hears what the people have to say; then asks the opinion of the priests — then comes back to Jesus — goes again to the priests and people — lends his ear — listens to the ferocity on the one hand, and feels the beauty on the other, balancing between them; and then he becomes bewildered, as a man of the world is apt to do who has had no groundwork of religious education, and hears superficial discussions on religious matters, and superficial charges, and superficial slanders, till he knows not what to think. What could come out of such procedure? Nothing but that cheerlessness of soul to which certainty respecting anything and everything here on earth seems unattainable. This is the exact mental state which we call scepticism.

Out of that mood, when he heard the enthusiast before him speak of a Kingdom of the Truth, there broke a sad, bitter, sarcastic sigh — "What is Truth?" Who knows anything about it? Another discoverer of the undiscoverable! *Jesting* Pilate! — With Pilate the matter was beyond a jest. It was not a question put for the sake of information; for he went immediately out, and did not stay for information. It was not put for the sake of ridicule; for he went out to say, "I find no fault in him." Sarcasm there was, perhaps; but it was that mournful, bitter sarcasm, which hides inward unrest in sneering words: that sad irony, whose very laugh rings of inward wretchedness.

We shall pursue, from this question of Pilate's, two lines of thought.

I. The causes of Pilate's scepticism.

II. The way appointed for discovering what is Truth.

I. The causes — and among these I name,

1. Indecision of character.

Pilate's whole behavior was a melancholy exhibition. He was a thing set up for the world's pity. See how he acts: he first throws the blame on the priests, and then acknowledges that all responsibility is his own; washes his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person. See ye to it." And then, — "Knowest thou not that *I* have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee?" He pronounces Jesus innocent; and then, with wondrous inconsistency, delivers Him to be scourged: yields Him up to be crucified, and then tries every underhand expedient to save Him.

What is there in all this but vacillation of character lying at the root of unsettledness of opinion? Here is a man knowing the right, and doing the wrong; not willing to do an act of manifest injustice if he can avoid it, but hesitating to prevent it, for fear of a charge against himself; pitiably vacillating because his hands were tied by the consciousness of past guilt and personal danger. How could such a man be certain about anything? What could a mind wavering, unstable, like a feather on the wind, know or believe of solid, stable truth, which altereth not, but remaineth like a rock amidst the vicissitudes of the ages, and the changeful fashions of the mind of men? "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." — "He that is *of* the truth heareth the voice of

it becomes unreal, — as gloomily unreal and as dreamily impalpable as it was to Pilate.

3. The third cause of Pilate's scepticism was the taint of the worldly temper of his day. Pilate had been a public man. He knew life: had mixed much with the world's business, and the world's politics: had come across a multiplicity of opinions, and gained a smattering of them all. He knew how many philosophies and religions pretended to an exclusive possession of Truth; and how the pretensions of each were overthrown by another. And his incredulity was but a specimen of the scepticism fashionable in his day; the polished scepticism of a polished educated Roman, a sagacious man of the world, too much behind the scenes of public life to trust professions of goodness or disinterestedness, or to believe in enthusiasm and a sublime life. And his merciful language, and his desire to save Jesus, was precisely the liberalism current in our day, as in his: an utter disbelief in the truths of a world unseen, but at the same time an easy, careless toleration, — a half-benevolent, half-indolent unwillingness to molest the poor dreamers who chose to believe in such superstitions.

This is the superficial liberalism which is contracted in public life. Public men contract a rapid way of discussing and dismissing the deepest questions: never going deep; satisfied with the brilliant flippancy which treats religious beliefs as phases of human delusion; seeing the hollowness of the characters around them, and believing that all is hollow; and yet not without their moments of superstition, as when Pilate was afraid, hearing of a Son of God, and connecting it doubtless with the heathen tales of gods

who had walked this earth in visible flesh and blood; which he had laughed at, and which he now for one moment suspected might be true: — not without their moments of horrible insecurity, when the question, "What is Truth?" is not a brilliant sarcasm, but a sarcasm on themselves, on human life, on human nature, wrung out of the loneliest and darkest bewilderment that can agonize a human soul.

To such a character Jesus would not explain His Truth. He gave no reply. He held His peace. God's Truth is too sacred to be expounded to superficial worldliness in its transient fit of earnestness.

4. Lastly, I assign, as a cause of scepticism, that priestly bigotry which forbids inquiry and makes doubt a crime.

The priests of that day had much to answer for. Consider for a moment the state of things. One — of whom *they* only knew that He was a man of unblemished life — came forward to proclaim Truth. But it was new; they had never heard such views before; they were quite sure they had never taught such, nor sanctioned such; and so they settled that the thing was heresy. He had no accredited ordination. "We know that God spake to Moses: as for this fellow, we know not whence he is." Then they proceeded to bind that decision upon others. A man was heard to say, "Why, what evil hath he done?" Small offence enough; but it savored of a dangerous candor towards a suspected man, and, in the priestly estimate, candor is the next step to heresy. "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us? and they cast him out of the synagogue." And so again with Pilate: they stifled his soul's rising convictions

with threats and penalties. "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend."

This was what they were always doing: they forbade all inquiry, and made doubt of their decision a crime.

Now, the results of this priestcraft were two-fold. The first result was seen in the fanaticism of the people who cried for blood: the second, in the scepticism of Pilate.

And these are the two results which come from all claims to infallibility, and all prohibition of inquiry. They make bigots of the feeble-minded who cannot think — cowardly bigots, who at the bidding of their priests or ministers swell the ferocious cry which forces a government, or a judge, or a bishop, to persecute some opinion which they fear and hate — turning private opinion into civil crime; and they make sceptics of the acute intellects which, like Pilate, see through their fallacies, and, like Pilate, too, dare not publish their misgivings.

And it matters not in what form that claim to infallibility is made: whether in the clear, consistent way in which Rome asserts it, or whether in the inconsistent way in which churchmen make it for their church, or religious bodies for their favorite opinions: wherever penalties attach to a conscientious conviction, be they the penalties of the rack and flame, or the penalties of being suspected, and avoided, and slandered, and the slur of heresy affixed to the name, till all men count him dangerous, lest they too should be put out of the synagogue, — and let every man who is engaged in persecuting any opinion ponder it: these two things

must follow — you make fanatics, and you make sceptics, — believers you cannot make.

Therefore do we stand by the central protest and truth of Protestantism. There is infallibility nowhere on this earth; — not in Rome; not in councils or convocations; not in the Church of England; not in priests; not in ourselves. The soul is thrown in the grandeur of a sublime solitariness on God. Woe to the spirit that stifles its convictions, when priests threaten, and the mob which they have maddened cries heresy, and insinuates disloyalty: "Thou art not Cæsar's friend."

II. The mode appointed for discovering the reply to the question, "What is Truth?"

Observe: I do not make our second division that which might seem the natural one — what Truth is. I am not about to be guilty of the presumption of answering the question which Jesus did not answer. Some persons hearing the text might think it to be the duty of any man, who took it as a text to preach upon, to lay down what Truth is; and if a minister were so to treat it, he might give you the fragment of Truth which his own poor mind could grasp; and he might call it, as the phrase is, The Truth, or The Gospel; and he might require his hearers to receive it on peril of salvation. And then he would have done as the priests did; and they who lean on other minds would have gone away bigoted; and they who think would have smiled sadly, bitterly, or sarcastically; and gone home to doubt still more, "What *is* Truth, and is it to be found?"

No, my brethren; the Truth cannot be compressed

into a sermon. The reply to Pilate's question cannot be contained in any verbal form. Think you, that if Christ Himself could have answered that question in a certain number of sentences, He would have spent thirty years of life in witnessing to it? Some men would compress into the limits of one reply, or one discourse, the truth which it took Christ thirty years to teach, and leave unfinished for the Spirit to complete.

One word. The Truth is infinite as the firmament above you. In childhood, both seem near and measurable; but with years they grow and grow, and seem further off, and further, and grander, and deeper, and vaster, as God Himself; till you smile to remember how you thought you could touch the sky, and blush to recollect the proud and self-sufficient way in which you used to talk of knowing or preaching "The Truth."

And once again: the Truth is made up of principles; an inward Life, not any formula of words. God's Character — Spiritual worship — the Divine Life in the Soul. How shall I put that into sentence, ten or ten thousand? "The words which I speak unto you, they are Truth, and they are *Life*." How could Pilate's question be answered except by a life? The Truth, then, which Pilate wanted — which you want, and I want — is not the boundless verities, but Truth of inward life. Truth for me: Truth enough to guide me in this darkling world; enough to teach me how to live, and how to die.

Now, the appointed ways to teach this Truth. They are three: Independence, Humbleness, Action.

First, Independence. Let no man start, as if inde

pendence savored of presumption. Protestant independence, they tell us, is pride and self-reliance; but, in truth, it is nothing more than a deep sense of personal responsibility; a determination to trust in God rather than in man to teach — in God and God's light in the soul. You choose a guide among precipices and glaciers: but you walk for yourself; judge his opinion, though more experienced than your own; overrule it, if needs be; use your own strength; rely on your own nerves. That is independence.

You select your own physician, deciding upon the respective claims of men, the most ignorant of whom knows more of the matter than you. You prudently hesitate, at times, to follow the advice of the one you trust most; yet that is only independence, without a particle of presumption.

And so precisely in matters of religious Truth. No man cares for your health as you do; therefore you rely blindly upon none. No man has the keeping of your own soul, or cares for it as you do. For yourself, therefore, you inquire and think, and you refuse to delegate that work to bishop, priest, or church. Call they that presumption? O! the man who knows the awful feeling of being alone, and struggling for truth as for life and death — he knows the difference between independence and presumption.

Second, Humbleness. There is no infallibility in man: if so, none in us. *We* may err: that one thought is enough to keep a man humble.

There are two kinds of temper contrary to this spirit. The first is a disputing, captious temper. Disagreement is refreshing when two men lovingly desire to compare their views to find out the truth. Contro-

versy is wretched when it is an attempt to prove one another wrong. Therefore Christ would not *argue* with Pilate. Religious controversy does only harm. It destroys the humble inquiry after truth; it throws all the energies into an attempt to prove ourselves right. The next contrary is a hopeless spirit. Pilate's question breathed of hopelessness. He felt that Jesus was unjustly condemned, but he thought him in views as hopelessly wrong as the rest — all wrong. What was truth? who knew anything about it? He spoke too bitterly, too hopelessly, too disappointedly, to get an answer. In that despairing spirit no man gets at truth: "*The meek* will he guide in judgment....."

Lastly, Action. This was Christ's rule: "If any man will *do* His will....." A blessed rule; a plain and simple. Here we are in a world of mystery, where all is difficult, and very much dark; where a hundred jarring creeds declare themselves the truth, and all are plausible. How shall a man decide? Let him *do* the right that lies before him: much is uncertain — some things, at least, are clear. Whatever else may be wrong, it must be right to be pure, to be just and tender, and merciful and honest. It must be right to love and to deny one's self. Let him do the will, and he shall know. Observe; men begin the other way. They say, If I could but believe, then I would make my life true. If I could but be sure what is truth, then I would set to work to live in earnest. No; God says, Act — make the life true, and then you will be able to believe. Live in earnest, and you will know the answer to what is Truth.

Infer the blessedness of belief. Young men are prone to consider scepticism a proof of strong-minded

ness — a something to be proud of. Let Pilate be a specimen — and a wretched one he is. He had clear-mindedness enough to be dissatisfied with all the views he knew: enough to see through and scorn the squabbles and superstitions of priests and bigots. All well: if from doubt of falsehood he had gone on to a belief in higher truth. But doubt, when it left him doubting — why, the noblest opportunity man ever had — that of saving the Saviour — he missed: he became a thing for the people to despise, and after-ages to pity. And that is scepticism. Call you that a manly thing?

To believe is to be happy: to doubt is to be wretched. But I will not urge that. Seventy years, and the most fevered brain will be still enough. We will not say much of the wretchedness of doubt. To believe is to be *strong*. Doubt cramps energy. Belief is power: — only so far as a man believes strongly, mightily, can he act cheerfully, or do anything that is worth the doing.

I speak to those who have learned to hold cheap the threats wherewith priests and people would terrify it to acquiescence — to those who are beyond the appeal of fear, and can only yield, if at all, to higher motives. Young men! the only manly thing, the only strong thing, is Faith. It is not so far as a man doubts, but so far as he believes, that he can achieve or perfect anything. "All things are possible to *him that believeth*."

blank despair, that shall shake our deep conviction that he whose faith shone brightly through life is now safe in the Everlasting arms. The dying scene is worth little — little, at least, to us — except so far as it is in harmony with the rest of life.

It is for this reason that the public estimate pronounced upon the departed is generally a fair criterion of worth. There are, of course, exceptional cases: cases in which the sphere of action has been too limited for the fair development of the character, and nothing but the light of the Judgment day can reveal it in its true aspect; cases in which party spirit has defaced a name, and years are wanted to wash away the mask of false color which has concealed the genuine features; cases in which the champion of truth expires amidst the execrations of his contemporaries, and after-ages build his sepulchre. These, however, are exceptions. For the most part, when all is over, general opinion is not far from truth. Misrepresentation and envy have no provocatives left them. What the departed was is tolerably well known in the circle in which he moved. The epitaph may be falsified by the partiality of relations; but the broad judgment of society reverses that, rectifies it, and pronounces, with perhaps a rude, but on the whole fair approximation to the truth.

These remarks apply to the history of the man whose final scene is recorded in the text. The verdict of the Egyptian world was worth much. Joseph had gone to Egypt, some years before, a foreigner; had lived there in obscurity; had been exposed to calumny; by his quiet, consistent goodness, had risen, step by step, first to respect, then to trust, command, and veneration; was embalmed after death in the affections, as

well as with the burial rites, of the Egyptians; and his honored form reposed at last amidst the burial-place of the Pharaohs.

In this respect the text branches into a two-fold division: the life of Joseph, and the death which was in accordance with that life.

I. The history of Joseph, as of every man, has two sides — its outward circumstances, and its inner life.

1. The outward circumstances were checkered with misfortune. Severed from his home in very early years, sold into slavery, cast into prison, — at first grief seemed to have marked him for her own. And this is human life. Part of its lot is misery. There are two inadequate ways of accounting for this mystery of sorrow. One, originating in a zeal for God's justice, represents it as invariably the chastisement of sin, or, at the least, as correction for fault. But, plainly, it is not always such. Joseph's griefs were the consequences, not of fault, but of rectitude. The integrity which, on some unknown occasion, made it his duty to carry his brethren's "evil report" to their father, was the occasion of his slavery. The purity of his life was the cause of his imprisonment. Fault is only a part of the history of this great matter of sorrow. Another theory, created by zeal for God's love, represents sorrow as the exception, and happiness as the rule of life. We are made for enjoyment, it is said, and on the whole there is more enjoyment than wretchedness. The common idea of Love being that which identifies it with a simple wish to confer happiness, no wonder that a feeble attempt is made to vindicate God by a reduction of the apparent

amount of pain. Unquestionably, however, Love is very different from a desire to shield from pain. Eternal Love gives to painlessness a very subordinate place in comparison of excellence of character. It does not hesitate to secure man's spiritual dignity at the expense of the sacrifice of his well-being. The solution will not do. Let us look the truth in the face. You cannot hide it from yourself. "Man is born to sorrow as the sparks fly upwards." Sorrow is not an accident, occurring now and then; it is the very woof which is woven into the warp of life. God has created the nerves to agonize, and the heart to bleed; and before a man dies almost every nerve has thrilled with pain, and every affection has been wounded. The account of life which represents it as probation is inadequate: so is that which regards it chiefly as a system of rewards and punishments. The truest account of this mysterious existence seems to be that it is intended for the development of the soul's life, for which sorrow is indispensable. Every son of man who would attain the true end of his being must be baptized with fire. It is the law of our humanity, as of that of Christ, that we must be perfected through suffering. And he who has not discerned the Divine Sacredness of Sorrow, and the profound meaning which is concealed in pain, has yet to learn what life is. The Cross, manifested as the Necessity of the Highest Life, alone interprets it.

2. Besides this, obloquy was a part of Joseph's portion. His brethren, even his father, counted him a vain dreamer, full of proud imaginings. He languished long in a dungeon, with a stain upon his character. He was subjected to almost all the bitterness

which changes the milk of kindly feelings into gall: to Potiphar's fickleness, to slander, to fraternal envy, to the ingratitude of friendship in the neglect of the chief butler, who left his prison and straightway forgot his benefactor. Out of all which a simple lesson arises, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." Yet that may be over-stated. Nothing chills the heart like universal distrust. Nothing freezes the genial current of the soul so much as doubts of human nature. Human goodness is no dream. Surely we have met unselfishness, and love, and honor, among men. Surely we have seen, and not in dreams, pure benevolence beaming from human countenances. Surely we have met with integrity that the world's wealth could not bribe, and attachment which might bear the test of any sacrifice. It is not so much the depravity as the frailty of men that makes it impossible to count on them. Was it not excusable in Jacob, and even natural, if he attributed to vanity his son's relation of the dream in which the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars, bowed down before him? Was it not excusable if Potiphar distrusted his tried servant's word, when his guilt appeared so indisputably substantiated? Was not even the chief butler's forgetfulness intelligible, when you remember his absorbing interest in his own danger, and the multiplied duties of his office? The world is not to be too severely blamed, if it misrepresents us. It is hard to reach the truth: very hard to sift a slander. Men who believe such rumors, especially in courtly life, may be ignorant, hasty, imperfect, but are not necessarily treacherous. Yet, even while you keep this in mind that the heart may not be soured, remember, your dearest

friend may fail you in the crisis. A truth of experience was wrapped up in the old fable, and the thing you have fostered in your bosom may wound you to the quick; the one you have trusted may become your Accuser, and throw his own blame, with dastard meanness, upon you. That was the experience of Joseph. Was not that His fate who trusted Judas? There is One, and but One, whose Love is as a rock, which will not fail you when you cling. It is a fearful, solitary feeling, that lonely truth of life; yet not without a certain strength and grandeur in it. The life that is the deepest and the truest will feel most vividly both its desolation and its majesty. We live and die alone. God and our own souls, — we fall back upon them, at last. "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."

3. Success, besides, marked the career of Joseph. Let us not take half views of men and things. The woof of life is dark — that we granted; but it is shot through a web of brightness. Accordingly, in Joseph's case, even in his worst days, you find a kind of balance to be weighed against his sorrows. The doctrine of compensation is found through all. Amidst the schemings of his brothers' envy he had his father's love. In his slavery he had some recompense in feeling that he was gradually winning his master's confidence. In his dungeon he possessed the consciousness of innocence, and the grateful respect of his fellow-prisoners. In that beautiful hymn which some of you read last Sunday,* you may remember that a

* Keble's Christian Year. Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

parallel is drawn between human life and the aspects of the weather. The morning rainbow, glittering among the dangerous vapors of the west, predicts that the day will not unclouded pass away. The evening rainbow declares that the storms are past, and that serene weather is setting in. Such is the life of all whom God disciplines. The morning or the evening brightness is the portion of a life the rest of which is storm. Rarely are the manful struggles of principle in the first years of life suffered to be in vain. Joseph saw the early clouds, which darkened the morning of his existence, pass away; and the rainbow of heavenly peace arched over the calmness of his later years. "The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man." And it is for this special purpose it is written, "And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were brought up upon Joseph's knees." Long life, an honored old age, a quiet grave — these were the blessings reckoned desirable in Jewish modes of thought; and they are mentioned as evidences of Joseph's happiness.

And this, too, is Life. The sorrows of the past stand out most vividly in our recollections, because they are the keenest of our sensations. At the end of a long existence, we should probably describe it thus: "Few and evil have the days of the years of thy servant been." But the innumerable infinitesimals of happiness, that from moment to moment made life sweet and pleasant, are forgotten; and very richly has our Father mixed the materials of these with the homeliest actions and domesticities of existence. See two men meeting together in the streets — mere

acquaintances. They will not be five minutes together before a smile will overspread their countenances, or a merry laugh ring of, at the lowest, amusement. This has God done. God created the smile and the laugh, as well as the sigh and the tear. The aspect of this life is stern — very stern. It is a very superficial account of it which slurs over its grave mystery, and refuses to hear its low, deep undertone of anguish. But there is enough, from hour to hour of bright, sunny happiness, to remind us that its Creator's highest name is Love.

Now, turn to the spirit of Joseph's inner life. First of all, that life was forgiveness. You cannot but have remarked that, conversant as his experience was with human treachery, no expressions of bitterness escape from him. No sentimental wailing over the cruelty of relations, the falseness of friendship, or the ingratitude of the world. No rancorous outburst of misanthropy: no sarcastic scepticism of man's integrity or woman's honor. He meets all bravely, with calm, meek, and dignified forbearance. If ever man had cause for such doubts, he had; yet his heart was never soured. At last, after his father's death, his brothers, apprehending his resentful recollections of their early cruelty, come to deprecate his revenge. Very touching is his reply. "Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now, therefore, fear ye not: I will nourish you and your little ones."

This is the Christian spirit before the Christian times. Christ was in Joseph's heart, though not

definitely in Joseph's creed. The Eternal Word whispered in the souls of men before it spoke articulately aloud in the Incarnation. It was the Divine Thought before it became the Divine Expression.* It was the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, before it blazed into the Day-spring from on high, which visited us. The Mind of Christ, the Spirit of the years yet future, blended itself with life before He came; for His words were the Eternal Verities of our Humanity. In all ages Love is the truth of life. Men cannot injure us except so far as they exasperate us to forget ourselves. No man is really dishonored except by his own act. Calumny, injustice, ingratitude,—the only harm these can do us is by making us bitter, or rancorous, or gloomy: by shutting our hearts or souring our affections. We rob them of their power, if they only leave us more sweet and forgiving than before. And this is the only true victory. We win by love. Love transmutes all curses, and forces them to rain down blessings. Out of the jealousy of his brothers Joseph extracted the spirit of forgiveness. Out of Potiphar's weak injustice, and out of the machinations of disappointed Passion, he created an opportunity of learning meekness. Our enemies become unconsciously our best friends, when their slanders deepen in us heavenlier graces. Let them do their worst; they only give us the Godlike victory of forgiving them.

2. Distinguished from the outward circumstances, we find simplicity of character: partly in the willingness to acknowledge his shepherd father in Egypt, where the pastoral life was an abomination; partly in

* Λογος ἐνδιάθετος — προφορικός.

that incidental notice which we have of the feast at which he entertained his brethren, where the Egyptians sat at a table by themselves, and Joseph by himself. So that, elevated as he was, his heart remained Hebrew still. He had contracted a splendid alliance, by marrying into one of the noblest families in Egypt, —that of Potipherah, the priest of On. And yet he had not forgotten his country, nor sought to be naturalized there. His heart was in that far land where he had fed his father's flocks, in his simple, genial boyhood. The divining-cup of Egyptian silver was on his table; but he remembered the days when the only splendor he knew was that coat of many colors which was made for him by his father. He bore a simple, unsophisticated heart amidst the pomp of an Egyptian court.

There is a great mistake made on the subject of simplicity. There is one simplicity of circumstances; another simplicity of heart. These two must not be confounded. It is common to talk of the humble poor man, and the proud rich man. Let not these ideas be inseparably blended together. There is many a man who sits down to a meal of bread and milk on a wooden table, whose heart is as proud as the proudest whose birth is royal. There is many a one whose voice is heard in the public meeting, loudly descanting on regal tyranny and aristocratic insolence, who in his own narrow circle is as much a tyrant as any oppressor who ever disgraced the throne. And there is many a man who sits down to daily pomp, to whom gold and silver are but as brass and tin, and who bears in the midst of it all a meek, simple spirit, and a "heart refrained as a weaned child:" — many a man

who lives surrounded with homage, and hearing the applause and flattery of men perpetually, on whose heart these things fall flat and dead, without raising one single emotion of fluttered vanity.

The world cannot understand this. They cannot believe that Joseph can be humble, while he is conscious of such elevation above the crowd of men, and even dreaming of it. They cannot understand how carelessly these outsides of life can be worn, and how they fall off like the unregarded and habitual dress of daily life. They cannot know how the spirit of the Cross can crucify the world, make grandeur painful, and calm the soul with a vision of the Eternal Beauty. They cannot dream how His life and death, once felt as the grandest, write mockery on all else, and fill the soul with an ambition which is above the world. It is not the unjewelled finger, nor the affectation of an almost quakerish simplicity of attire, nor the pedestrian mode of travelling, nor the scanty meal, that constitute humility. It is that simple, inner life of real greatness, which is indifferent to magnificence, and, surrounded by it all, lives far away in the distant country of a Father's Home, with the cross borne silently and self-sacrificingly in the heart of hearts.

3. One characteristic of Joseph's inner life remains, — benevolence. It was manifested in the generosity with which he entertained his brethren, and in the discriminating tenderness with which he provided his best beloved brother's feast with extraordinary delicacies. These were traits of thoughtfulness. But further still. The prophetic insight of Joseph enabled him to foresee the approach of famine. He took measures accordingly; and when the famine came,

the royal storehouses were opened, and every man in Egypt owed his life to the benevolent providence of the Hebrew stranger. It was productive of a great social revolution. It brought, by degrees, all the land of Egypt into the power of the Crown, so that a kind of feudal system was established,— every man holding in direct tenancy from the Crown. Hence the nation became compacted into a new unity, and power was concentrated in the hands of government, partly by the pecuniary revenue thus added, and partly by the lustre of goodness which Joseph had thrown round the royal acts. For acts like these are the real bulwarks of a throne. One such man as Joseph does more to strengthen the Crown than all the speculations, solemn or trifling, which were ever written on the "Divine right of kings." There *is* a right divine which requires no elaborate theory to make it felt.

II. The death of Joseph was in accordance with his life.

1. The funeral was a homage paid to goodness. Little is said in the text of Joseph's funeral. To know what it was, we must turn to the earlier part of the chapter, where that of Jacob is mentioned. A mourning of seventy days,— a funeral whose imposing greatness astonished the Canaanites. They said, "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians." Seventy days were the time, or nearly so, fixed by custom for a royal funeral; and Jacob was so honored, not for his own sake, but because he was Joseph's father. We cannot suppose that Joseph's own obsequies were on a scale less grand.

Now, weigh what was implied in this. This was

not the homage paid to talent, nor to wealth, nor to birth. Joseph was a foreign slave, raised to eminence by the simple power of goodness. Every man in Egypt felt, at his death, that he had lost a friend. There were thousands whose tears would fall when they recounted the preservation of lives dear to them in the years of famine, and felt that they owed those lives to Joseph. Grateful Egypt mourned the Good Foreigner; and for once the honors of this world were given to the graces of another.

2. We collect from this, besides, a hint of the resurrection of the body. The Egyptian mode of sepulture was embalming; and the Hebrews, too, attached much importance to the body after death. Joseph commanded his countrymen to preserve his bones to take away with them. In this we detect that unmistakable human craving, not only for immortality, but immortality associated with form. No doubt the Egyptian feeling was carried out absurdly. They tried to redeem from the worm the very aspect that had been worn, the very features they had loved; and there was a kind of feeling that while that mummy lasted the man had not yet perished from earth. They expected that, in process of years, it would again be animated by its spirit.

Now, Christianity does not disappoint, but rather meets, that feeling. It grants all that the materialist and all that the spiritualist have a right to ask. It grants to the materialist, by the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, that future life shall be associated with a material form. Leaving untouched all the questions which may be raised about the identity of the atoms that have been buried, it simply pronounces

that the spirit shall have a body. It grants to the spiritualist all he ought to wish,— that the spirit shall be free from evil. For it is a mistake of ultra-spiritualism to connect degradation with the thought of a risen body; or to suppose that a mind, unbound by the limitations of space, is a more spiritual idea of a resurrection than the other. The opposite to spirituality is not materialism, but sin. The form of matter does not degrade. For what is this world itself but the Form of Deity, whereby the Manifoldness of His mind and Beauty manifests, and wherein it clothes itself? It is idle to say that the spirit can exist apart from form. We do not know that it can. Perhaps even the Eternal Himself is more closely bound to His works than our philosophical systems have conceived. Perhaps matter is only a mode of thought. At all events, all that we know or can know of mind exists in union with form. The resurrection of the body is the Christian verity, which meets and satisfies those cravings of the ancient Egyptian mind, that expressed themselves in the process of embalming, and the religious reverence felt for the very bones of the departed by the Hebrews.

Finally, in the last Will and Testament of Joseph, we find faith. He commanded his brethren, and through them his nation, to carry his bones with them when they migrated to Canaan. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, that is reckoned an evidence of faith. "By faith, Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones." How did he know that his people would ever quit Egypt? We reply, by faith. Not faith in a written word, for Joseph had no Bible; rather, faith in that conviction of his own heart, which is itself the

substantial evidence of faith. For religious faith ever dreams of something higher, more beautiful, more perfect, than the state of things with which it feels itself surrounded. Ever a day future lies before it: the evidence for which is its own hope. Abraham, by that creative faith, saw the day of Christ, and was glad Joseph saw his family in prosperity, even in affluence; but he felt that this was not their rest. A higher life than that of affluence, a nobler destiny than that of stagnant rest, there must be for them in the future; else all the anticipations of a purer earth, and a holier world, which imagination bodied forth within his soul, were empty dreams, not the intuitions of God's Spirit. It was this idea of perfection, which was the "substance of things hoped for," that carried him far beyond the period of his own death, and made him feel himself a partaker of his nation's blessed future.

And that is the evidence of immortality. When the coffin is lowered into the grave, and the dull, heavy sound of earth falling on it is heard, there are some to whom that sound seems but an echo of their worst anticipations — seems but to reverberate the idea of decay forever, in the words, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." There are others, to whom it sounds pregnant with the expectations of immortality, the "sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life." The difference between these two feelings is measured by the difference of lives. They whose life is low and earthly, how can they believe in aught beyond the grave, when nothing of that life which is eternal has yet stirred within them? They who have lived as Joseph lived, just in proportion to their purity

and their unselfishness must believe it. They cannot but believe it. The eternal existence is already pulsing in their veins; the life of trust, and high hope, and sublime longings after perfection, with which the decay of the frame has nothing at all to do. That is gone; yes, but it was not that life in which they lived; and when it finished, what had that ruin to do with the destruction of the Immortal?

For what is our proof of immortality? Not the analogies of nature — the resurrection of nature from a winter grave, or the emancipation of the butterfly. Not even the testimony to the fact of risen dead; for who does not know how shadowy and unsubstantial these intellectual proofs become in unspiritual frames of mind? No, the life of the Spirit is the evidence. Heaven begun is the living proof that makes the heaven to come credible. "Christ in you is the hope of glory." It is the eagle eye of faith which penetrates the grave, and sees far into the tranquil things of death. He alone can believe in immortality who feels the resurrection in him.

There is a special application to be made of this subject to our hearts. It is not often that the pulpit can be used for a funeral eulogium. Where Christ is to be exalted in solitary preëminence, it is but rarely that the praise of man may be heard. Rank, Royalty itself, could not command from the lips of a minister of the King of kings one syllable of adulatory, undeserved, or unfelt homage. But there are cases in which to loftiness of birth is added dignity of character; and then we gladly relax the rule, to pay a willing tribute to the majesty of Goodness. There is one to whom your thoughts must have reverted often during the

history which we have been going through, suggesting a parallel all the more delicately felt from the absence of direct allusion. That royal Lady, for whose loss the marvellous uniformity of the unbroken funeral hue which pervades this congregation tells eloquently of general mourning, came to this land, a few years ago, like Joseph, a foreigner. Like Joseph, the earlier years of her sojourn were spent in comparative obscurity. Like Joseph, she had her share of calumny, though in a different form. There are many here who can remember that, in that year, when our political feuds had attained the acme of rancor, the irreverent lip of party Slander dared to breathe its rank venom upon the name of one of the gentlest that ever adorned a throne. There are some who know how that unpopularity was met: with meekness, with Christian forgiveness, with quiet dignity, with that composure which is the highest result and evidence of strength. Like Joseph, she passed through the temptations of a court with unsullied spotlessness; like Joseph, the domestic and social relationships were sustained with beautiful fidelity; like Joseph, she lived down opposition, outlived calumny; like Joseph, she used the noble income intrusted to her in acts of almost unexampled munificence; like Joseph, her life was checkered with sorrow, and when the clouds of earlier difficulties had cleared away, the rainbow sign of peace, even in the midst of broken health, spanned the calmness of her evening years; like Joseph, she will have a regal burial, and her ashes will repose with the dust of England's princes, amidst the mourning of the nation in which she found a home.

The homage which is given to her is not the homage

yielded to rank, or wealth, or genius. There will be silver on her coffin, and magnificence in the pageantry which attends her to the grave;* but it is not in these that the glory of her funeral lies. These were the privileges of the most profligate of her ancestors, as well as her. These are the world's rewards for those whom she delights to honor. There will be something in her funeral, beside which these things are mean. There is a grandeur in a nation's tears; and they will be shed in unfeigned reverence over the remains of all that was most queenly, and all that was most womanly. No political fervor mixes with her obsequies. She stood identified with no party politics. No peculiar religious party mourns its patroness. Of all our jarring religious sects, in the Church and out of it, not one dares to claim her as its own. Her spirit soared above these things. It is known that she scarcely recognized them. All was lost in the sublimer name of Christian. It is a *Christian* who has passed from this earth away, to take her place in the general Assembly and Church of the first-born; to stand before God, the Judge of all, among the spirits of the just made perfect.

One word more. Honoring the Queen, profoundly reverencing the Woman, let not contemplation stop there. Do not bury thought in the human and finite. Mildly as her lustre shone on earth, remember it was but one feeble ray of the Light that is Uncreated. All that she had she received. If we honor her, it is

* This anticipation has not been realized. In one of the most touching and unaffected documents that ever went right home to English hearts, the Queen of a British Sovereign requested to be borne to the grave as the wife of a sailor.

to adore Him who made her what she was. C
fulness she had received, and grace for grace.
she was she became through adoring faith in
It is an elevating thing to gaze on human exce
because through it the Highest becomes co
It is a spirit-stirring thing to see saintly uo
asserting its celestial origin by turning pale the
of the highest earthly rank. For in this uni
mourning our noble country has not bowed the
in reverence to the majesty which is of time. I
heart in England has felt that the Sovereign
merged in the servant of Christ. "The
daughter was all glorious within." Hers was
tian goodness. Her eyes had beheld the King i
beauty; and therefore her life was beautiful, and fem-
inine, and meek, and simple. It was all deriv
beauty. She had robed herself in Christ. "Reflect-
ing back, as from a burnished mirror, the glory of t
Lord, she was changed into the same image, fro
glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

* 2 Cor. iii. 18. This appears to be the true force and rendering of the metaphor.

Subjoined are the directions given by her late Majesty for her own funeral. The reader will be glad to have them preserved in a form less inconvenient than the columns of a newspaper. Should he be one who feels it a relief to miss, for once, the worn-out conventionalisms of religious expression, and come in contact with something fresh and living, he will find more in these quiet lines than in ten sermons: more to make a very happy tear start; more of the simplicity and the beauty of the life in God; more to cool the feverishness of his heart, and still its worldliness into silence; more of that deep rest into which the meek and humble enter; more that will make him long to be simple, and inartificial, and real, as Christ was, desiring only in life, and death, and judgment, to be found in HIM.

[COPY.]

"I die in all humility, knowing well that we are all alike before the Throne of God, and request, therefore, that my mortal remains be conveyed to the grave without any pomp or state. They are to be moved to St. George's Chapel, Windsor, where I request to have as private and quiet a funeral as possible.

"I particularly desire not to be laid out in state, and the funeral to take place by daylight, no procession, the coffin to be carried by sailors to the chapel.

"All those of my friends and relations, to a limited number, who wish to attend, may do so. My nephew, Prince Edward of Saxe Weimar, Lords Howe and Denbigh, the Hon. William Ashley, Mr. Wood, Sir Andrew Barnard, and Sir D. Davies, with my dressers, and those of my ladies who may wish to attend.

"I die in peace, and wish to be carried to the tomb in peace, and free from the vanities and the pomp of this world.

"I request not to be dissected, nor embalmed; and desire to give as little trouble as possible.

(Signed) "ADELAIDE R.

"November, 1849."

[redacted]

SECOND SERIES.

[redacted]

SERMONS.

I.

[Preached June 22, 1851.]

CHRIST'S JUDGMENT RESPECTING INHERITANCE.*

LUKE xii. 13–15. — "And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

THE Son of God was misunderstood and misinterpreted in his day. With this fact we are familiar; but we are not all familiar with the consideration that it was very natural He should be so mistaken.

He went about Galilee and Judea proclaiming the downfall of every injustice, the exposure and confutation of every lie. He denounced the lawyers who refused education to the people in order that they might retain the key of knowledge in their own hands. He reiterated Woe! woe! woe! to the Scribes and

* This Sermon was accidentally omitted from its proper place after the 17th Sermon in Vol. I. — "The Message of the Church to Men of Wealth." It was preached on the following Sunday, and is the sequel to that Sermon.

Pharisees, who revered the past, and systematically persecuted every new prophet and every brave man who rose up to vindicate the *spirit* of the past against the *institutions* of the past. He spoke parables which bore hard on the men of wealth. That, for instance, of the rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; who died, and in hell lifted up his eyes being in torments. That of the wealthy proprietor who prospered in the world; who pulled down his barns to build greater: who all the while was in the sight of God a fool; who in front of judgment and eternity was found unready. He stripped the so-called religious party of that day of their respectability; convicted them, to their own astonishment, of hypocrisy, and called them whited sepulchres. He said God was against them; that Jerusalem's day was come, and that she must fall.

And now consider candidly: — Suppose that all this had taken place in this country; that an unknown stranger, with no ordination, with no visible authority,— basing his authority upon his Truth, and his agreement with the mind of God the Father, — had appeared in this England, uttering half the severe things He spoke against the selfishness of wealth, against ecclesiastical authorities, against the clergy, against the popular religious party: — suppose that such an one should say that *our* whole social life is corrupt and false: suppose that, instead of "thou blind Pharisee," the word had been "thou blind Churchman!"

Should *we* have fallen at the feet of such an one, and said, Lo! this is a message from Almighty God, and He who brings it is a Son of God; perhaps, what He says Himself, His only Son, God, of God?

Or, should we have rather said, This is dangerous teaching, and revolutionary in its tendencies; and He who teaches it is an incendiary, a mad, democratical, dangerous fanatic?

That was exactly what they did say of your Redeemer in His day; nor does it seem at all wonderful that they did.

The sober, respectable inhabitants of Jerusalem, very comfortable themselves, and utterly unable to conceive why things should not go on as they had been going on for a hundred years, — not smarting from the misery and the moral degradation of the lazars with whom He associated, and under whose burdens His loving spirit groaned, — thought it excessively dangerous to risk the subversion of their quiet enjoyments by such outcries. They said — prudent men! — If he is permitted to go on this way, the Romans will come and take away our place and nation. The Priests and Pharisees, against whom he had spoken specially, were fiercer still. They felt there was no time to be lost.

But, still more — His own friends and followers misunderstood Him.

They heard Him speak of a Kingdom of Justice and Righteousness, in which every man should receive the due reward of his deeds. They heard him say that this kingdom was not far off, but actually among them, hindered only by their sins and dulness from immediate appearance. Men's souls were stirred and agitated. They were ripe for anything, and any spark would have produced explosion. They thought the next call would be to take the matter into their own hands.

Accordingly, on one occasion, St. John and St. James asked permission to call down fire from heaven upon a village of the Samaritans which would not receive their message. On another occasion, on a single figurative mention of a sword, they began to gird themselves for the struggle: "Lord," said one, "behold, here are two swords." Again, as soon as He entered Jerusalem for the last time, the populace heralded his way with shouts, thinking that the long-delayed hour of retribution was come at last. They saw the conqueror before them who was to vindicate their wrongs. In imagination they already felt their feet upon the necks of their enemies.

And because their hopes were disappointed, and He was not the Demagogue they wanted, therefore they turned against Him. Not the Pharisees, but the people whom He had come to save, — the outcast, and the publican, and the slave, and the maid-servant: they whose cause He had so often pleaded, and whose emancipation he had prepared. It was the *People* who cried, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!"

This will become intelligible to us, if we can get at the spirit of this passage.

Among those who heard Him lay down the laws of the Kingdom — Justness, Fairness, Charity — there was one who had been defrauded, as it seems, by his brother, of his just share of the patrimony. He thought that the One who stood before him was exactly what he wanted: — a redresser of wrongs; a champion of the oppressed; a divider and arbiter between factions; a referee of lawsuits; one who would spend his life in the unerring decision of all misunderstandings.

To his astonishment, the Son of Man refused to interfere in his quarrel, or take part in it at all. "Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?"

We ask attention to two things.

I. The Saviour's refusal to interfere.

II. The source to which He traced the appeal for interference.

I. The Saviour's refusal to interfere.

1. He implied that it was not his *part* to interfere. "Who made me a Judge, or a Divider?"

It is a common saying, that religion has nothing to do with politics; and particularly there is a strong feeling current against all interference with politics by the ministers of religion. This notion rests on a basis which is partly wrong, partly right.

To say that religion has nothing to do with politics, is to assert that which is simply false. It were as wise to say that the atmosphere has nothing to do with the principles of architecture. Directly, nothing — indirectly, much. Some kinds of stone are so friable, that though they will last for centuries in a dry climate, they will crumble away in a few years in a damp one. There are some temperatures in which a form of building is indispensable which in another would be unbearable. The shape of doors, windows, apartments, all depend upon the air that is to be admitted or excluded. Nay, it is for the very sake of procuring a habitable atmosphere within certain limits that architecture exists at all. The atmospheric laws are distinct from the laws of architecture; but there is not an architectural question into which atmospheric

considerations do not enter as conditions of the question.

That which the air is to architeture, religion is to politics. It is the vital air of every question. Directly it determines nothing — indirectly, it conditions every problem that can arise. "The kingdoms of this world must become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." How, if His Spirit is not to mingle with political and social truths?

Nevertheless, in the popular idea that religion as such must not be mixed with politics there is a profound truth. Here, for instance, the Saviour will not meddle with the question. He stands aloof, sublime and dignified. It was no part of His to take from the oppressor and give to the oppressed, much less to encourage the oppressed to take from the oppressor himself. It was His part to forbid oppression. It was a Judge's part to decide what oppression was. It was not His office to determine the boundaries of civil right, nor to lay down the rules of the descent of property. Of course, there was a spiritual and moral principle involved in this question. But He would not suffer His sublime mission to degenerate into the mere task of deciding casuistry.

He asserted principles of love, unselfishness, order, which would decide all questions; but the questions themselves He would not decide. He would lay down the great political principle, "Render unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." But He would not determine whether this particular tax was due to Cæsar or not.

So, too, He would say, Justice, like Mercy and Truth

is one of the weightier matters of the law; but He would not decide whether, in this definite case, this or that brother had justice on his side. It was for themselves to determine that, and in that determination lay their responsibility.

And thus religion deals with men, not cases; with human hearts, not casuistry.

Christianity determines general principles, out of which no doubt the best government would surely spring; but what the best government is it does not determine — whether Monarchy or a Republic, an Aristocracy or a Democracy.

It lays down a great social law: Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal. But it is not its part to declare how much is just and equal. It has no fixed scale of wages according to which masters must give. That it leaves to each master, and each age of society.

It binds up men in a holy brotherhood. But what are the best institutions and surest means for arriving at this brotherhood it has not said. In particular, it has not pronounced whether competition or coöperation will secure it.

And hence it comes to pass that Christianity is the Eternal Religion, which can never become obsolete. If it sets itself to determine the temporary and the local,—the justice of this tax, or the exact wrongs of that conventional maxim,—it would soon become obsolete: it would be the religion of one century, not of all. As it is, it commits itself to nothing except Eternal Principles.

It is not sent into this world to establish monarchy, or secure the franchise; to establish socialism, or to

frown it into annihilation; but to establish a Charity, and a Moderation, and a sense of Duty, and a love of Right, which will modify human life according to any circumstances that can possibly arise.

2. In this refusal, again, it was implied that His kingdom was one founded on spiritual disposition, not one of outward Law and Jurisprudence.

That this lawsuit should have been decided by the brothers themselves, in love, with mutual fairness, would have been much; that it should be determined by authoritative arbitration was, spiritually speaking, nothing. The right disposition of their hearts, and the right division of their property thence resulting, was Christ's kingdom. The apportionment of their property by another's division had nothing to do with His kingdom.

Suppose that both were wrong: one oppressive, the other covetous. Then, that the oppressor should become generous, and the covetous liberal, were a great gain. But, to take from one selfish brother in order to give to another selfish brother, what spiritual gain would there have been in this?

Suppose, again, that the retainer of the inheritance was in the wrong, and that the petitioner had justice on his side; that he was a humble, meek man, and his petition only one of right. Well, to take the property from the unjust and give it to Christ's servant, might be, and was, the duty of a Judge. But it was not Christ's part, nor any gain to the cause of Christ. He does not reward His servants with inheritances—with lands, houses, gold. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Christ triumphs by wrongs meekly

borne, even more than by wrongs legally righted. What we call poetical justice is not His kingdom.

To apply this to the question of the day. The great problem which lies before Europe for solution is, or will be, this: Whether the present possessors of the soil have an exclusive right to do what they will with their own; or whether a larger claim may be put in by the workman for a share in the profits? Whether Capital has hitherto given to Labor its just part or not? Labor is at present making an appeal, like that of this petitioner, to the Church, to the Bible, to God. "Master, speak unto my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me."

Now, in the *mere* setting of that question to rest, Christianity is not interested. That landlords should become more liberal, and employers more merciful, — that tenants should be more honorable, and workmen more unselfish, — that would be indeed a glorious thing, a triumph of Christ's cause; and any arrangement of the inheritance *thence* resulting would be a real coming of the kingdom. But whether the soil of the country and its capital shall remain the property of the rich, or become more available for the poor, — the rich and the poor remaining as selfish as before; — whether the selfish rich shall be able to keep, or the selfish poor to take, is a matter, religiously speaking, of profound indifference. Which of the brothers shall have the inheritance, the monopolist or the covetous? Either — neither; who cares? Fifty years hence, what will it matter? But a hundred thousand years hence it *will* matter whether they settled the question by mutual generosity and forbearance.

3. I remark a third thing. He refused to be the

friend of one, because He was the friend of both. He never was the champion of a class, because He was the champion of Humanity.

We may take for granted that the petitioner was an injured man, — one, at all events, who thought himself injured; and Christ had often taught the spirit which would have made his brother right him: but He refused to take his part against his brother, just because he *was* his brother, Christ's servant, and one of God's family, as well as he.

And this was His spirit always. The Pharisees thought to commit Him to a side, when they asked whether it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not. But He would take no side as the Christ: neither the part of the government against the tax-payers, nor the part of the tax-payers against the government.

Now, it is a common thing to hear of the rights of man, — a glorious and a true saying; but, as commonly used, the expression only means the rights of a section or class of men. And it is very worthy of remark, that in these social quarrels both sides appeal to Christ and to the Bible as the champions of their rights, precisely in the same way in which this man appealed to Him. One class appeal to the Bible, as if it were the great Arbiter which decrees that the poor shall be humble, and the subject submissive; and the other class appeal to the same book triumphantly, as if it were exclusively on their side: its peculiar blessedness consisting in this — that it commands the rich to divide the inheritance, and the ruler to impose nothing that is unjust.

In either of these cases, Christianity is degraded, and the Bible misused. They are not as they have

been made — O shame! — for centuries, the servile defenders of Rank and Wealth, nor are they the pliant advocates of discontent and rebellion.

The Bible takes neither the part of the poor against the rich exclusively, nor that of the rich against the poor; and this because it proclaims a real, deep, true, and not a revolutionary brotherhood.

The brotherhood of which we hear so much is often only a one-sided brotherhood. It demands that the rich shall treat the poor as brothers. It has a right to do so. It is a brave and a just demand: but it forgets that the obligation is mutual; that, in spite of his many faults, the rich man is the poor man's brother, and that the poor man is bound to recognize him and feel for him as a brother.

It requires that every candid allowance shall be made for the vices of the poorer classes, in virtue of the circumstances which, so to speak, seem to make such vices inevitable: for their harlotry, their drunkenness, their uncleanness, their insubordination. Let it enforce that demand; it may and must do it in the name of Christ. He was mercifully and mournfully gentle to those who, through terrible temptation and social injustice, had sunk; and sunk into misery at least as much as into sin. But, then, let it not be forgotten that some sympathy must be also due, on the same score of circumstances, to the rich man. Wealth has its temptations, — so has power. The vices of the rich are his forgetfulness of responsibility, his indolence, his extravagance, his ignorance of wretchedness. These must be looked upon, not, certainly, with weak excuses, but with a brother's eye, by the poor man, if he will assert a brotherhood. It is not just to

attribute all to circumstances in the one case, and nothing in the other. It is not brotherhood to say that the laborer does wrong because he is tempted, and the man of wealth because he is intrinsically bad.

II. The Source to which He traced this appeal for a division.

Now, it is almost certain that the reflection which arose to the lips of Christ is not the one which would have presented itself to us under similar circumstances. We should probably have sneered at the state of the law in which a lawsuit could obtain no prompt decision, and injury get no redress: or, we should have remarked upon the evils of the system of primogeniture, and asked whether it were just that one brother should have all, and the others none: or, we might, perhaps, have denounced the injustice of permitting privileged classes at all.

He did nothing of this kind: He did not sneer at the law, nor inveigh against the system, nor denounce the privileged classes. He went deeper—to the very root of the matter. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." It was covetousness which caused the unjust brother to withhold; it was covetousness which made the defrauded brother indignantly complain to a stranger. It is covetousness which is at the bottom of all lawsuits, all social grievances, all political factions. So St. James traces the genealogy. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even from your lusts which reign in your flesh?"

Covetousness: the covetousness of all. Of the oppressed as well as the oppressor; for the cry,

"Divide," has its root in covetousness just as truly as "I will not." There are no innocent classes; no devils who oppress, and angels who are oppressed. The guilt of a false social state must be equally divided.

We will consider somewhat more deeply this covetousness. In the original the word is a very expressive one. It means the desire of having more, — not of having more because there is not enough, but simply a craving after more. More when a man has not enough, — more when he has. More — more. Ever more. Give — give. Divide — Divide.

This craving is not universal. Individuals and whole nations are without it. There are some nations the condition of whose further civilization is that the desire of accumulation be increased. They are too indolent or too unambitious to be covetous. Energy is awakened when wants are immediate, pressing, present; but ceases with the gratification.

There are other nations in which the craving is excessive, even to disease. Preëminent among these is England. This desire of accumulation is the source of all our greatness and all our baseness. It is at once our glory and our shame. It is the cause of our commerce, of our navy, of our military triumphs, of our enormous wealth, and our marvellous inventions. And it is the cause of our factions and animosities, of our squalid pauperism, and the worse than heathen degradation of the masses of our population.

That which makes this the more marvellous is, that of all nations on the earth none are so incapable of enjoyment as we. God has not given to us that delicate development which He has given to other

races. Our sense of harmony is dull and rare; our perception of beauty is not keen. An English holiday is rude and boisterous. If protracted, it ends in *ennui* and self-dissatisfaction. We cannot enjoy. Work, the law of human nature, is the very need of an English nature. That cold shade of Puritanism which passed over us, sullenly eclipsing all grace and enjoyment, was but the shadow of our own melancholy, unenjoying national character.

And yet we go on accumulating, as if we could enjoy more by having more. To quit the class in which they are, and rise into that above, is the yearly, daily, hourly effort of millions in this land. And this were well, if this word "above" implied a reality; if it meant higher intellectually, morally, or even physically. But the truth is, it is only higher fictitiously. The middle classes already have every real enjoyment which the wealthiest can have. The only thing they have not is the ostentation of the means of enjoyment. More would enable them to multiply equipages, houses, books: it could not enable them to enjoy them more.

Thus, then, we have reached the root of the matter. Our national craving is, in the proper meaning of the term, covetousness. Not the desire of enjoying more, but the desire of having more.

And if there be a country, a society, a people, to whom this warning is specially applicable, that country is England, that society our own, that people we. "Take heed and beware of covetousness."

The true remedy for this covetousness He then proceeds to give. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses."

Now, observe the distinction between His view and the world's view of humanity. To the question, What is a man worth? the world replies by enumerating what he has. In reply to the same question, the Son of Man replies by estimating what he is. Not what he has, but what he is—that, through time and through eternity, is his real and proper life. He declared the presence of the soul; He announced the dignity of the spiritual man; He revealed the being that we are. Not that which is supported by meat and drink, but that whose very life is in Truth, Integrity, Honor, Purity. "Skin for skin," was the satanic version of this matter: "All that a man hath will he give for his *life*." "What shall it profit a man," was the Saviour's announcement, "if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own *soul?*"

For the oppressed and the defrauded this was the true consolation and compensation. The true consolation. This man had lost so much loss. Well; how is he consoled? By the thought of retaliation? By the promise of revenge? By the assurance that he shall have what he ought by right to have? Nay; but thus—*as it were:* Thou hast lost so much, but thyself remains. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses."

Most assuredly Christianity proclaims laws which will eventually give to each man his rights. I do not deny this. But I say that the hope of these rights is not the message, nor the promise, nor the consolation, of Christianity. Rather they consist in the assertion of the true Life, instead of all other hopes; of the substitution of blessedness, which is inward character, for happiness, which is outward satisfactions of desire.

For the broken-hearted, the peace which the world cannot give. For the poor, the life which destitution cannot take away. For the persecuted, the thought that they are the children of their Father which is in heaven.

A very striking instance of this is found in the consolation offered by St. Paul to slaves. How did he reconcile them to their lot? By promising that Christianity would produce the abolition of the slave-trade? No; though this *was* to be effected by Christianity; but by assuring them that, though slaves, they might be inly free — Christ's freedmen. Art thou called, being a slave? *Care not for it.*

This, too, was the real compensation offered by Christianity for injuries.

The other brother had the inheritance; and to win the inheritance he had laid upon his soul the guilt of injustice. His advantage was the property; the price he paid for that advantage was a hard heart. The injured brother had *no inheritance*, but instead he had, or might have had, innocence, and the conscious joy of knowing that he was not the injurer. Herein lay the balance.

Now, there is great inconsistency between the complaints and claims that are commonly made on these subjects. There are outcries against the insolence of power, and the hard-hearted selfishness of wealth. Only too often these cries have a foundation of justice. But be it remembered that these are precisely the cost at which the advantages, such as they are, are purchased. The price which the man in authority has paid for power is the temptation to be insolent. He has yielded to the temptation, and bought his

advantage dear. The price which the rich man pays for his wealth is the temptation to be selfish. They have paid in spirituals for what they have gained in temporals. Now, if you are crying for a share in that wealth, and a participation in that power, you must be content to run the risk of becoming as hard, and selfish, and overbearing, as the man whom you denounce. Blame their sins, if you will, or despise their advantages; but do not think that you can covet their advantages and keep clear of their temptations. God is on the side of the poor, and the persecuted, and the mourners,—a light in darkness, and a life in death. But the poverty, and the persecution, and the darkness, are the condition on which they feel God's presence. They must not expect to have the enjoyment of wealth and the spiritual blessings annexed to poverty at the same time. If you will be rich, you must be content to pay the price of falling into temptation, and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition; and if that price be too high to pay, then you must be content with the quiet valleys of existence, where alone it is well with us; kept out of the inheritance, but having instead God for your portion, your all-sufficient and everlasting portion—peace, and quietness, and rest with Christ.

II.

[Preached January 6, 1850.]

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

MATT. ii. 1, 2. — "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

OUR subject is the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. The King of the Jews has become the Sovereign of the world; a fact, one would think, which must cause a secret complacency in the heart of all Jews. For that which is most deeply working in modern life and thought is the Mind of Christ. His name has passed over our institutions, and much more has His Spirit penetrated into our social and domestic existence. In other words, a Hebrew mind is now, and has been for centuries, ruling Europe.

But the Gospel which He proclaimed was not limited to the Hebrews; it was a Gospel for the nations. By the death of Christ, God had struck his death-blow at the root of the hereditary principle. "We be the seed of Abraham," was the proud pretension of the Israelite; and he was told that spiritual dignity rests not upon spiritual descent, but upon spiritual

character. New tribes were adopted into the Christian union; and it became clear that there was no distinction of race in the spiritual family. The Jewish rite of circumcision, a symbol of exclusiveness, cutting off one nation from all others, was exchanged for Baptism, the symbol of universality, proclaiming the nearness of all to God, His Paternity over the human race, and the Sonship of all who chose to claim their privileges.

This was a Gospel for the world; and nation after nation accepted it. Churches were formed; the Kingdom which is the domain of Love grew; the Roman empire crumbled into fragments; but every fragment was found pregnant with life. It broke not as some ancient temple might break, its broken pieces lying in lifeless ruin, overgrown with weeds: rather as one of those mysterious animals break, of which if you rend them asunder, every separate portion forms itself into a new and complete existence. Rome gave way; but every portion became a Christian kingdom, alive with the mind of Christ, and developing the Christian idea after its own peculiar nature.

The portion of Scripture selected for the text and for the Gospel of the day has an important bearing on this great Epiphany. The "wise men" belonged to a creed of very hoary and venerable antiquity; a system, too, which had in it the elements of strong vitality. For seven centuries after, the Mahometan sword scarcely availed to extirpate it, — indeed, could not. They whom the Mahometans called fire-worshippers clung to their creed with vigor and tenacity indestructible, in spite of all his efforts.

Here, then, in this act of homage to the Messiah,

were the representatives of the highest then existing influences of the world, doing homage to the Lord of a mightier influence, and reverently bending before the dawn of the Star of a new and brighter Day. It was the first distinct turning of the Gentile mind to Christ — the first instinctive craving after a something higher than Gentilism could ever satisfy.

In this light our thoughts arrange themselves thus:

I. The expectation of the Gentiles.

II. The Manifestation or Epiphany.

I. The expectation: "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him."

Observe, 1. The craving for Eternal Life. The "wise men" were "Magians," that is, Persian priests. The name, however, was extended to all the eastern philosophers who professed that religion, or even that philosophy. The Magians were chiefly distinguished by being worshippers of the stars, or students of astronomy.

Now, astronomy is a science which arises from man's need of religion: other sciences spring out of wants bounded by this life. For instance, anatomy presupposes disease. There would be no prying into our animal frame, no anatomy, were there not a malady to stimulate the inquiry. Navigation arises from the necessity of traversing the seas to appropriate the produce of other countries. Charts, and maps, and soundings, are made, because of a felt earthly want. But in astronomy the first impulse of mankind came not from the craving of the intellect, but from the necessities of the soul.

If you search down into the constitution of your being till you come to the lowest deep of all, underlying all other wants you will find a craving for what is infinite; a something that desires perfection; a wish that nothing but the thought of that which is eternal can satisfy. To the untutored mind nowhere was that want so called into consciousness, perhaps, as beneath the mighty skies of the East. Serene and beautiful are the nights in Persia, and many a wise man in earlier days, full of deep thoughts, went out into the fields, like Isaac, to meditate at eventide. God has so made us that the very act of looking *up* produces in us perceptions of the sublime. And then those skies in their calm depths mirroring that which is boundless in space and illimitable in time, with a silence profound as death and a motion gliding on forever, as if symbolizing eternity of life, no wonder if men associated with them their highest thoughts, and conceived them to be the home of Deity. No wonder if an Eternal Destiny seemed to sit enthroned there. No wonder if they seemed to have in their mystic motion an invisible sympathy with human life and its mysterious destinies. No wonder if he who best could read their laws was reckoned best able to interpret the duties of this life, and all that connects man with that which is invisible. No wonder if in those devout days of young thought, science was only another name for religion, and the Priest of the great temple of the universe was also the Priest in the temple made with hands. Astronomy was the religion of the world's youth.

The Magians were led by the star to Christ; their astronomy was the very pathway to their Saviour.

Upon this I make one or two remarks.

1. The folly of depreciating human wisdom. Of all vanities the worst is the vanity of ignorance. It is common enough to hear learning decried, as if it were an opposite of religion. If that means that science is not religion, and that the man who can calculate the motions of the stars may never have bowed his soul to Christ, it contains a truth. But if it means, as it often does, that learning is a positive encumbrance and hindrance to religion, then it is as much as to say that the God of nature is not the God of Grace; that the more you study the Creator's works, the further you remove from Himself; nay, we must go further, to be consistent, and hold, as most uncultivated and rude nations do, that the state of idiocy is nearest to that of inspiration.

There are expressions of St. Paul often quoted as sanctioning this idea. He tells his converts to beware, "lest any man spoil you through philosophy." Whereupon we take for granted that modern philosophy is a kind of antagonist to Christianity. This is one instance out of many of the way in which an ambiguous word, misunderstood, becomes the source of infinite error. Let us hear St. Paul. He bids Timothy "beware of profane and old wives' fables." He speaks of "endless genealogies," "worshipping of angels," "intruding into those things which men have not seen." This was the philosophy of those days: a system of wild fancies spun out of the brain,—somewhat like what we might now call demonolatry; but as different from philosophy as any two things can differ.

They forget, too, another thing. Philosophy has become Christian; science has knelt to Christ. There is a deep significance in that homage of the Magians.

For it in fact was but a specimen and type of that which science has been doing ever since. The mind of Christ has not only entered into the Temple, and made it the house of prayer: it has entered into the temple of science, and purified the spirit of philosophy. This is its spirit now, as expounded by its chief interpreter: "Man, the interpreter of Nature, knows nothing, and can do nothing, except that which Nature teaches him." What is this but science bending before the Child, becoming childlike, and, instead of projecting its own fancies upon God's word, listening reverently to hear what it has to teach him? In a similar spirit, too, spoke the greatest of philosophers, in words quoted in every child's book: "I am but a child, picking up pebbles on the shore of the great sea of Truth."

O! be sure all the universe tells of Christ and leads to Christ. Rightly those ancient Magians deemed, in believing that God was worshipped truly in that august temple. The stars preach the mind of Christ. Not as of old, when a mystic star guided their feet to Bethlehem: but now, to the mind of the astronomer, they tell of Eternal Order and Harmony; they speak of changeless law where no caprice reigns. You may calculate the star's return; and to the day, and hour, and minute, it will be there. This is the fidelity of God. These mute masses obey the law impressed upon them by their Creator's Hand, unconsciously; and that law is the law of their own nature. To understand the laws of our nature, and consciously and reverently to obey them, that is the mind of Christ, the sublimest spirit of the Gospel.

I remark again: This universe may be studied in an

irreverent spirit. In Dan. ii. 48, we find the reverence which was paid to science. Daniel among the Chaldees was made chief of the wise men, that is, the first of the Magians; and King Nebuchadnezzar bowed before him, with incense and oblations. In later days we find that spirit changed. Another king, Herod, commands the wise men to use their science for the purpose of letting him know where the Child was. In earlier times they honored the priest of nature: in later times they made use of him.

Only by a few is science studied now in the sublime and reverent spirit of old days. A vulgar demand for utility has taken the place of that lowly prostration with which the world listened to the discoveries of truth. The discovery of some new and mighty agent, by which the east and west are brought together in a moment, awakens chiefly the emotion of delight in us that correspondence and travelling will be quickened. The merchant congratulates himself upon the speedier arrival of the news which will give him the start of his rivals, and enable him to out-race his competitors in the competition of wealth. Yet, what is this but the utilitarian spirit of Herod, seeing nothing more solemn in a mysterious star than the means whereby he might crush his supposed Rival?

There is a spirit which believes that "godliness is gain," and aims at being godly for the sake of advantage; which is honest, because honesty is the best policy; which says, Do right, and you will be the better — that is, the richer — for it. There is a spirit which seeks for wisdom simply as a means to an earthly end, — and that often a mean one. This is a spirit rebuked by the nobler reverence of the earlier

days of Magianism. Knowledge for its own pure sake. God for His own sake. Truth for the sake of truth. This was the reason for which, in earlier days, men read the aspect of the heavens.

2. Next, in this craving of the Gentiles, we meet with traces of the yearning of the human soul for light. The Magian system was called the system of Light about seven centuries B. C. A great reformer (Zoroaster) had appeared, who either restored the system to its purity, or created out of it a new system. He said that Light is Eternal, — that the Lord of the Universe is Light; but, because there was an eternal Light, there was also an eternal possibility of the absence of Light. Light and Darkness, therefore, were the eternal principles of the universe, — not equal principles, but one the negation of the other. He taught that the soul of man needs light, — a light external to itself, as well as in itself. As the eye cannot see in darkness, and is useless, so is there a capacity in the soul for light: but it is not itself light; it needs the Everlasting light from outside itself.

Hence the stars became worshipped as the symbols of this light. But by degrees these stars began to stand in the place of the Light Himself. This was the state of things in the days of these Magians.

Magianism was now midway between its glory and its decline. For its glory we must go back to the days of Daniel, when a monarch felt it his privilege to do honor to the priest of Light; when that priest was the sole medium of communication between Deity and man, and through him alone "Oromasdes" made his revelations known; when the law given by the Magian, revealed by the eternal stars, was

"the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." For its lowest degradation we must pass over about half a century from the time we are now considering, till we find ourselves in Samaria, in the presence of Simon the Magian. He gave himself out for the great power of God. He prostituted such powers and knowledge as he possessed to the object of making gain. Half dupe, half impostor, in him the noble system of light had sunk to petty charlatanism: Magianism had degenerated into Magic.

Midway between these two periods, or rather nearer to the latter, stood the Magian of the text. There is a time in the history of every superstition when it is respectable, even deserving reverence, when men believed it; when it is in fact associated with the highest feelings that are in man, and the channel even for God's manifestation to the soul. And there is a time when it becomes less and less credible, when clearer science is superseding its pretensions; and then is the period in which one class of men, like Simon, keep up the imposture: the priests, who will not let the old superstition die, but go on, half impostors, half deceived by the strong delusion wherewith they believe their own lie. Another class, like Herod, the wise men of the world, who patronize it for their own purposes, and make use of it as an engine of state. Another still, who turn from side to side, feeling with horror the old, and all that they held dear, crumbling away beneath them, — the ancient lights going out, — more than half suspecting the falsehood of all the rest, and, with an earnestness amounting almost to agony, leaving their own homes, and inquiring for fresh light.

Such was the posture of these Magians. You can-

not enter into their questions, or sympathize with their wants, unless you realize all this. For that desire for light is one of the most impassioned of our noble natures. The noble prayer of the ancient world (Δὸς φάος καὶ ὄλεσσον), "Give light, and let us die:" can we not feel it? Light — light! O, if the result were the immediate realization of the old fable, and the blasting of the daring spirit in the moment of Revelation of its God, — yet give us light. The wish for light, the expectation of the manifestation of God, is the mystery which lies beneath the history of the whole ancient world.

II. The Epiphany itself.

1. They found a king. There is something very significant in the fact of that king being discovered as a child. The royal child was the answer to their desires. There are two kinds of monarchy, rule, or command. One is that of hereditary title; the other is that of Divine Right. There are kings of men's making, and kings of God's making. The secret of that command which men obey involuntarily is submission of the ruler himself to law. And this is the secret of the Royalty of the Humanity of Christ. No principle through all His Life is more striking, none characterizes it so peculiarly as His submission to another Will. "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." — "The words which I speak, I speak not of myself." His commands are not arbitrary. They are not laws given on authority only: they are the eternal laws of our humanity, to which He Himself submitted; the obedience to which alone can make our being attain its

end. This is the secret of His kingship,—"He became obedient . . . wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him."

And this is the secret of all influence, and all command. Obedience to a law above you subjugates minds to you who never would have yielded to mere will. "Rule thyself, thou rulest all."

2. Next, observe the adoration of the Magians—very touching and full of deep truth. The wisest of the world bending before the *Child*. Remember the history of Magianism. It began with awe, entering into this world beneath the serene skies of the East: in Wonder and Worship. It passed into priestcraft and scepticism. It ended in Wonder and Adoration, as it had begun; only with a truer and nobler meaning.

This is but a representation of human life. "Heaven lies around us in our infancy." The child looks on this world of God's as *one*, not many—all beautiful—wonderful—God's—the creation of a Father's hand. The man dissects, breaks it into fragments; loses love and worship in speculation and reasoning; becomes more manly, more independent, and less irradiated with a sense of the presence of the Lord of all; till at last, after many a devious wandering, if he be one whom the Star of God is leading blind by a way he knows not, he begins to see all as one again, and God in all. Back comes the Childlike spirit once more in the Christianity of old age. We kneel before the Child; we feel that to adore is greater than to reason; to love, and worship, and believe, bring the soul nearer heaven than scientific analysis. The Child is nearer God than we.

And this, too, is one of the deep sayings of Christ:

"Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

3. Lastly, In that Epiphany we have to remark the Magians' joy. They had seen the star in the east. They followed it — it seemed to go out in dim obscurity. They went about inquiring: asked Herod, who could tell them nothing; asked the scribes, who only gave them a vague direction. At last the star shone out once more, clear before them in their path. "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."

Perhaps the hearts of some of us can interpret that. There are some who have seen the star that shone in earlier days go out — quench itself in black vapors or sour smoke. There are some who have followed many a star that turned out to be but an *ignis fatuus*, — one of those bright exhalations which hover over marshes and church-yards, and only lead to the chambers of the dead, or the cold, damp pits of disappointment; and, O, the blessing of "exceeding joy," after following in vain, — after inquiring of the great men and learning nothing, of the religious men and finding little, — to see the Star at last resting over "the place where the young Child lies;" — after groping the way alone, to see the star stand still, — to find that Religion is a thing far simpler than we thought; that God is near us, that to kneel and adore is the noblest posture of the soul. For, whoever will follow with fidelity his *own* star, God will guide him aright. He spoke to the Magians by the star; to the shepherds, by the melody of the heavenly host; to Joseph, by a dream; to Simeon, by an inward revelation. "Gold,

and frankincense, and myrrh," — these, and ten times these, were poor and cheap to give for that blessed certainty that the star of God is on before us.

Two practical hints, in conclusion.

1. A hint of immortality. That star is now looking down on the wise men's graves; and if there be no life to come, then this is the confusion: that mass of inert matter is pursuing its way through space, and the minds that watched it, calculated its movements, were led by it through aspiring wishes to holy adorations, — those minds, more precious than a thousand stars, have dropped out of God's universe. And then God cares for mere material masses more than for spirits, which are the emanation and copy of Himself. Impossible. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." God is the Father of our *Spirits*. Eternity and immeasurableness belong to thought alone. You may measure the cycles of that star by years and miles. Can you bring any measurement which belongs to time or space by which you can compute the length or breadth or the duration of one pure thought, one aspiration, one moment of love? This is eternity. Nothing but thought can be immortal.

2. Learn, finally, the truth of the Epiphany by heart. To the Jew it chiefly meant that the Gentile, too, could become the child of God. But to us? — Is that doctrine obsolete? Nay, it requires to be reiterated in this age as much as in any other. There is a spirit in all our hearts whereby we would monopolize God, conceiving Him an unapproachable Being, — whereby we may terrify other men outside our own pale, — instead of the Father that is near to all, whom

we have to approach, and whom to adore is blessedness.

This is our Judaism: we do not believe in Epiphany. We do not believe that God is the Father of the world; we do not actually credit that He has a star for the Persian priest, and celestial melody for the Hebrew shepherd, and an unsyllabled voice for all humble and inquiring spirits in His world. Therefore remember, Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition; He has revealed *Our* Father, proclaimed that there is no distinction in the spiritual family and established a real Brotherhood on earth.

III.

[Preached February 10, 1850.]

THE HEALING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER.

MATT. ix. 23–25. — "And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, he said unto them, Give place; for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose."

THIS is one of a pair of miracles, the full instruction from neither of which can be gained unless taken in connection with the other.

On His way to heal the daughter of Jairus, the Son of Man was accosted by another sufferer, afflicted twelve years with an issue of blood. Humanly speaking, there were many causes which might have led to the rejection of her request. The case was urgent; a matter of life and death; delay might be fatal; a few minutes might make all the difference between living and dying. Yet Jesus not only performed the miracle, but refused to perform it in a hurried way; paused to converse; to inquire who had touched him; to perfect the lesson of the whole. On His way to perform one act of Love, He turned aside to give His attention to another.

The practical lesson is this: There are many who are so occupied by one set of duties as to have no time for others: some whose life-business is the suppression of the slave-trade, — the amelioration of the state of prisons, — the reformation of public abuses. Right, except so far as they are monopolized by these, and feel themselves discharged from other obligations. The minister's work is spiritual; the physician's, temporal. But, if the former neglect physical needs, or the latter shrink from spiritual opportunities on the plea that the cure of bodies, not of souls, is his work, so far they refuse to imitate their Master.

He had an ear open for every tone of wail; a heart ready to respond to every species of need. Specially the Redeemer of the soul, He was yet as emphatically the "Saviour of the body." He "taught the people;" but He did not neglect to multiply the loaves and fishes. The peculiar need of the woman, the father's cry of anguish, the infant's cry of helplessness, the wail of oppression, and the shriek of pain, — all were heard by Him, and none in vain.

Therein lies the difference between Christian love and the impulse of mere inclinations. We hear of men being "interested" in a cause; it has some peculiar charm for them individually: the wants of the heathen, or the destitution of the soldier and sailor, or the conversion of the Jews, according to men's associations, or fancies, or peculiar bias, may engage their attention, and monopolize their sympathy. I am far from saying these are wrong: I only say, that so far as they only *interest*, and monopolize interest, the source from which they spring is only human, and not the highest. The difference between such beneficence and that which is

the result of Christian love is marked by partiality in one case, universality in the other Love is universal. It is interested in all that is human: not merely in the concerns of its own family, nation, sect, or circle of associations. Humanity is the sphere of its activity.

Here, too, we find the Son of Man the pattern of our humanity. His bosom was to mankind what the Ocean is to the world. The Ocean has its own mighty tide; but it receives and responds to, in exact proportion, the tidal influences of every estuary, and river, and small creek, which pours into its bosom. So in Christ: His bosom heaved with the tides of our humanity; but every separate sorrow, pain, and joy, gave its pulsation, and received back influence from the sea of His being.

Looking at this matter somewhat more closely, it will be plain that the delay was only apparent. Seemingly there was delay, and fatal delay: while he yet spake, there came news of the child's death. But just so far as the resurrection of the dead is a mightier miracle than the healing of the sick, just so far did the delay enhance and illustrate, instead of dimming, the glory of His mission.

But more definitely still. The miracles of Jesus were not merely arbitrary acts; they were subject to the laws of the spiritual world. It was, we may humbly say, impossible to convey a spiritual blessing to one who was not spiritually susceptible. A certain inward character, a certain relation (*rapport*) to the Redeemer, was required to make the mercy efficacious. Hence in one place we read, "He could not do many miracles there because of their unbelief." And His

perpetual question was, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?"

Now, Jairus beheld this miracle. He saw the woman's modest touch approaching the hem of the Saviour's garment. He saw the abashed look with which she shrunk from public gaze and exposure. He heard the language of Omniscience—"Somebody hath touched me." He heard the great principle enunciated that the only touch which reaches God is that of Faith. The multitude may throng and press: but heart to heart, soul to soul, mind to mind, only so do we come in actual contact with God. And, remembering this, it is a matter not of probability, but of certainty, that the soul of Jairus was actually made more capable of a blessing than before; that he must have walked with a more hopeful step; that he must have heard the announcement, "Thy daughter is dead," with less dismay; that the words, "Fear not, only believe," must have come to him with deeper meaning, and been received with more implicit trust, than if Jesus had not paused to heal the woman, but hurried on.

And this is the principle of the spiritual kingdom. In matters worldly, the more occupations, duties, a man has, the more certain is he of doing all imperfectly. In the things of God, it is reversed. The more duties you perform, the more you are fitted for doing others: what you lose in time, you gain in strength. You do not love God the less, but the more, for loving man. You do not weaken your affection for your family by cultivating attachments beyond its pale, but deepen and intensify it. Respect for the alien, tenderness for the heretic, do not interfere with, but rather strengthen, attachment to your own country

and your own church. He who is most liberal in the case of a foreign famine, or a distant mission, will be found to have only learned more liberal love towards the poor and unspiritualized of his own land: so false is the querulous complaint that money is drained away by such calls, to the disadvantage of more near and juster claims.

You do not injure one cause of mercy by turning aside to listen to the call of another.

I. The uses of Adversity.

II. The principles of a Miracle.

I. The simplest and obvious use of sorrow is to remind of God. Jairus and the woman, like many others, came to Christ from a sense of want. It would seem that a certain shock is needed to bring us in contact with reality. We are not conscious of our breathing till obstruction makes it felt. We are not aware of the possession of a heart till some disease, some sudden joy or sorrow, rouses it into extraordinary action. And we are not conscious of the mighty cravings of our half Divine humanity, we are not aware of the God within us, till some chasm yawns which must be filled, or till the rending asunder of our affections forces us to become fearfully conscious of a need.

And this, too, is the reply to a rebellious question which our hearts are putting perpetually: Why am I treated so? Why is my health or my child taken from me? What have I done to deserve this? So Job passionately complained that God had set him up as a mark to empty His quiver on.

The reply is, that gifts are granted to elicit our affections: they are resumed to elicit them still more; for we never know the value of a blessing till it is gone. Health, children, — we must lose them before we know the love which they contain.

However, we are not prepared to say that a charge might not, with some plausibility, be brought against the love of God, were no intimation ever given that God means to resume His blessings. That man may fairly complain of his adopted father, who has been educated as his own son, and, after contracting habits of extravagance, looking forward to a certain line of life, cultivating certain tastes, is informed that he is only adopted; that he must part with these temporary advantages, and sink into a lower sphere. It would be a poor excuse to say that all he had before him was so much gain, unmerited. It is enough to reply that false hopes were raised, and knowingly.

Nay, the laws of countries sanction this. After a certain period a title to property cannot be interfered with: if a right of way or road has existed, in the venerable language of the law, after a custom "whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," no private right, however dignified, can overthrow the public claim. I do not say that a bitter feeling might not have some show of justice, if such were the case with God's blessings.

But the truth is this: God confers His gifts with distinct reminders that they are His. He gives us for a season spirits taken out of His universe; brings them into temporary contact with us; and we call them father, mother, sister, child, friend. But, just as in some places, on one day in the year, the way or

path is closed in order to remind the public that they pass by sufferance, and not by right, in order that no lapse of time may establish "adverse possession," so does God give warning to us. Every ache and pain, every wrinkle you see stamping itself on a parent's brow, every accident which reveals the uncertain tenure of life and possessions, every funeral bell that tolls, are only God's reminders that we are tenants at will, and not by right, — pensioners on the bounty of an hour. He is closing up the right of way, warning fairly that what we have is lent, not given: His, not ours. His mercies are so much gain. The resumption of them is no injustice. Job learned that, too, by heart. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Again, observe the misuse of sorrow. When He came to the house, He found the minstrels and people making a noise. In the East, not content with natural grief, they use artificial means to deepen and prolong it. Men and women make it a separate profession to act as mourners,— to exhibit for hire the customary symbols and wail of grief, partly to soothe, and partly to rivet sorrow deeply, by expression of it.

The South and North differ greatly from each other in this respect. The nations of the North restrain their grief, — affect the tearless eye and the stern look. The expressive South, and all the nations whose origin is from thence, are demonstrative in grief. They beat their breasts, tear their hair, throw dust upon their heads. It would be unwise were either to blame or ridicule the other, so long as each is true to Nature. Unwise for the nations of the South to deny the reality of the grief which is repressed and silent. Unjust

in the denizen of the North, were he to scorn the violence of Southern grief, or call its uncontrollable demonstrations unmanly. Much must be allowed for temperament.

These two opposite tendencies, however, indicate the two extremes into which men may fall in this matter of sorrow. There are two ways in which we may defeat the purposes of God in grief — by forgetting it, or by over-indulging it.

The world's way is to forget. It prescribes gayety as the remedy for woe; banishes all objects which recall the past; makes it the etiquette of feeling, even amongst near relations, to abstain from the mention of the names of the lost; gets rid of the mourning weeds as soon as possible — the worst of all remedies for grief. Sorrow, the discipline of the Cross, is the school for all that is highest in us. Self-knowledge, true power, all that dignifies humanity, are precluded, the moment you try to merely banish grief. It is a touching truth that the Saviour refused the anodyne on the cross that would have deadened pain. He would not steep His senses in oblivion. He would not suffer one drop to trickle down the side of His Father's cup of anguish untasted.

The other way is to nurse sorrow: nay, even our best affections may tempt us to this. It seems treason to those we have loved to be happy now. We sit beneath the cypress; we school ourselves to gloom. Romance magnifies the fidelity of the broken heart; we refuse to be comforted.

Now, all this must be done by effort, generally speaking. For God has so constituted both our hearts and the world that it is hard to prolong grief beyond

a time. Say what we will, the heart has in it a surprising, nay, a startling elasticity. It cannot sustain unalterable melancholy: and beside our very pathway plants grow, healing and full of balm. It is a sullen heart that can withstand the slow but sure influences of the morning sun, the summer day, the sky and flowers, and the soothing power of human sympathy.

We are meant to sorrow; but "not as those without hope." The rule seems to consist in being simply natural. The great thing which Christ did was to call men back to simplicity and nature; not to perverted, but original nature. He counted it no derogation of His manhood to be seen to weep. He thought it no shame to mingle with merry crowds. He opened His heart wide to all the genial and all the mournful impressions of this manifold life of ours. And this is what we have to do: be natural. Let God—that is, let the influences of God—freely play unthwarted upon the soul. Let there be no unnatural repression, no control of feeling by mere effort. Let there be no artificial and prolonged grief, no "minstrels making a noise." Let great Nature have her way. Or, rather, feel that you are in a Father's world, and live in it with Him, frankly, in a free, fearless, childlike, and natural spirit. Then grief will do its work healthily. The heart will bleed, and stanch when it has bled enough. Do not stop the bleeding; but also do not open the wound afresh.

II. We come to the principles on which a Miracle rests.

1. I observe that the perception of it was confined

to a few. Peter, James, John, and the parents of the child, were the only ones present. The rest were excluded. To behold wonders, certain inward qualifications, a certain state of heart, a certain susceptivity, are required. Those who were shut out were rendered incapable by disqualifications. Absence of spiritual susceptibility in the case of those who "laughed Him to scorn," — unbelief in those who came with courteous scepticism, saying, "Trouble not the Master;" in other words, He is not master of impossibilities, — unreality in the professional mourners, the most hopeless of all disqualifications. Their whole life was acting: they had caught the tone of condolence and sympathy as a trick. Before minds such as these the wonders of creation may be spread in vain. Grief and joy alike are powerless to break through the crust of artificial semblance which envelops them. Such beings see no miracles. They gaze on all with dead, dim eyes, - wrapped in conventionalisms, their life a drama in which they are but actors, modulating their tones and simulating feelings according to a received standard How can such be ever witnesses of the supernatural, or enter into the presence of the Wonderful? Two classes alone were admitted. They who, like Peter, James, and John, lived the life of courage, moral purity, and love; and they who, like the parents, had had the film removed from their eyes by grief. For there is a way which God has of forcing the spiritual upon men's attention. When you shut down the lid upon the coffin of a child, or one as dearly loved, there is an awful want, a horrible sense of insecurity, which sweeps away the glittering mist of time from the edge of the abyss, and you gaze on the phan-

tom-wonders of the unseen. Yes, — real anguish qualifies for an entrance into the solemn chamber where all is miracle.

In another way, and for another reason, the numbers of those who witness a miracle must be limited, Jairus had his daughter restored to life: the woman was miraculously healed. But, if every anxious parent and every sick sufferer could have the wonder repeated in his or her case, the wonder itself would cease. This is the preposterousness of the sceptic's demand. Let *me* see a miracle, on an appointed day and hour, and I will believe. Let us examine this.

A miracle is commonly defined to be a contravention of the laws of nature. More properly speaking, it is only a higher operation of those same laws, in a form hitherto unseen. A miracle is perhaps no more a suspension or contradiction of the laws of nature than a hurricane or a thunder-storm. They who first travelled to tropical latitudes came back with anecdotes of supernatural convulsions of the elements. In truth, it was only that they had never personally witnessed such effects: but the hurricane which swept the waves flat, and the lightning which illuminated all the heaven or played upon the bayonets or masts in lambent flame, were but effects of the very same laws of electricity and meteorology which were in operation at home. A miracle is perhaps no more in contravention of the laws of the universe than the direct interposition of a whole nation, in cases of emergency, to uphold what is right in opposition to what is established, is an opposition to the laws of the realm. For instance, the whole people of Israel reversed the unjust decree of Saul which had sentenced Jonathan to death.

But law is the expression only of a people's will. Ordinarily we see that expression mediately made through judges, office-bearers, kings: and so long as we see it in this mediate form, we are, by habit, satisfied that all is legal. There are cases, however, in which not an indirect, but a direct expression of a nation's will, is demanded. Extraordinary cases; and, because extraordinary, they who can only see what is legal in what is customary, conventional, and in the routine of written precedents, get bewildered, and reckon the anomalous act illegal or rebellious. In reality, it is only the source of earthly law, the nation, pronouncing the law without the intervention of the subordinate agents.

This will help us to understand the nature of a miracle. What we call laws are simply the subordinate expression of a Will. There must be a Will before there can be a law. Certain antecedents are followed by certain consequents. When we see this succession, we are satisfied, and call it natural. But there are emergencies in which it may be necessary for the Will to assert itself, and become not the mediate, but the immediate antecedent to the consequent. No subordinate agent interposes,— simply the First cause comes in contact with a result. The audible expression of will is followed immediately by something which is generally preceded by some lower antecedent, which we call a cause. In this case, you will observe, there has been no contravention of the laws of Nature,— there has only been an immediate connection between the First cause and the last result. A miracle is the manifestation to man of the voluntariness of Power.

Now, bearing this in mind, let it be supposed that every one had a right to demand a miracle; that the

occurrence of miracles was unlimited; that as often as you had an ache, or trembled for the loss of a relation, you had but to pray, and receive your wish.

Clearly, in this case, first of all, the constitution of the universe would be reversed. The will of man would be substituted for the will of God. Caprice and chance would regulate all: — God would be dethroned: God would be degraded to the rank of one of those beings of supernatural power with whom Eastern romance abounds, who are subordinated by a spell to the will of a mortal, who is armed with their powers and uses them as vassals: God would be merely the genius who would be chained by the spell of prayer to obey the behests of man. Man would arm himself with the powers of Deity, and God would be his slave.

Further still: This unlimited extension of miracles would annihilate miracles themselves. For, suppose that miracles were universal; that prayer was directly followed by a reply; that we could all heal the sick and raise the dead: this, then, would become the common order of things. It would be what we now call nature. It would cease to be extraordinary, and the infidel would be unsatisfied as ever. He would see only the antecedent, prayer, and the invariable consequent, a reply to prayer — exactly what he sees now in the process of causation. And then, just as now he would say, What more do we want? These are the laws of the universe: why interpose the complex and cumbrous machinery of a God, the awkward hypothesis of a will, to account for laws?

Miracles, then, are necessarily limited. The non-limitation of miracles would annihilate the miraculous

Lastly, It is the intention of a miracle to manifest the Divine in the common and ordinary.

For instance, in a boat on the Sea of Tiberias, the Redeemer rose and rebuked the storm. Was that miracle merely a proof of his Divine mission? Are we merely to gather from it that then and there, on a certain day, in a certain obscure corner of the world, Divine power was at work. It is conceivable that a man might credit that miracle; that he might be exceedingly indignant with the rationalist who resolves it into a natural phenomenon,—and it is conceivable that that very man might tremble in a storm. To what purpose is that miracle announced to him? He believes in God existing in the past, but not in the present; he believes in a Divine presence in the supernatural, but discredits it in the natural. He recognizes God in the marvellous, but does not feel Him in the wonderful of every day: unless it has taught him that the waves and winds now are in the hollow of the hand of God, the miracle has lost its meaning.

Here again, as in many other cases, Christ healed sickness and raised the dead to life. Are we merely to insert this among the "Evidences of Christianity," and then, with lawyer-like sagacity, having laid down the rules of Evidence, say to the infidel, "Behold our credentials; we call upon you to believe our Christianity"? This were a poor reason to acount for the putting forth of Almighty Power. More truly and more deeply, these miracles were vivid manifestations to the senses that Christ is the Saviour of the body; that now, as then, the issues of life and death are in His hands; that our daily exist-

ence is a perpetual miracle. The extraordinary was simply a manifestation of God's power in the ordinary. Nay, the ordinary marvels are greater than the extraordinary; for these are subordinate to them — merely indications and handmaids, guiding us to perceive and recognize a constant Presence, and reminding us that in every-day existence the miraculous and the Godlike rule us.

IV.

[Preached March 10, 1850.]

BAPTISM.

Gal. iii. 26–29. — "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Wherever opposite views are held with warmth by religious-minded men, we may take for granted that there is some higher truth which embraces both. All high truth is the union of two contradictories. Thus predestination and free will are opposites; and the truth does not lie between these two, but in a higher reconciling truth, which leaves both true. So with the opposing views of baptism. Men of equal spirituality are ready to sacrifice all to assert, and to deny, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. And the truth, I believe, will be found, not in some middle, moderate, timid doctrine, which skilfully avoids extremes; but in a truth larger than either of these opposite views, which is the basis of both, and which really is that for which each party tenaciously clings to its own view as to a matter of life and death.

The present occasion — the decision of the Privy Council — only requires us to examine three views.

I. That of Rome.

II. That of modern Calvinism.

III. That of (as I believe) Scripture and the Church of England.

I. The doctrine of Rome respecting baptism. We will take her own authorities.

1. "If any one say that the sin of Adam . . . . . is taken away, either by the powers of human nature, or by any other remedy than the merit of the One Mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ . . . . or denies that the merit of Jesus Christ, duly conferred by the sacrament of baptism in the church form, is applied to adults as well as to children — let him be accursed." Sess. v. 4.

"If any one deny that the imputation of original sin is remitted by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which is conferred in baptism, or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper character of sin is not taken away, but only not imputed — let him be accursed."

"If any one says that grace is not given by sacraments of this kind always and to all, so far as God's part is concerned, but only at times, and to some, although they be duly received — let him be accursed."

"If any one say that by the sacraments of the New Covenant themselves grace is not conferred by the efficacy of the rite (opus operatum), but that faith alone is sufficient for obtaining grace — let him be accursed."

"If any one say that in three sacraments — that

is, baptism, confirmation, and orders — a character is not impressed upon the soul — that is, a certain spiritual and indelible mark (for which reason they cannot be repeated) — let him be accursed." Sess. vii., cap. 7–9.

"By baptism, putting on Christ, we are made a new creation in Him, obtaining plenary and entire remission of all sins."

It is scarcely possible to misrepresent the doctrine so plainly propounded. Christ's merits are instrumentally applied by baptism; original sin is removed by a change of nature; a new character is imparted to the soul; a germinal principle or seed of life is miraculously given; and all this, in virtue not of any condition in the recipient, nor of any condition except that of the due performance of the rite.

This view is held with varieties, and modifications of many kinds, by an increasingly large number of the members of the Church of England; but we do not concern ourselves with these timid modifications, which painfully attempt to draw some subtle hair-breadth distinction between themselves and the above doctrine. The true, honest, and only honest representation of this view is that put forward undisguisedly by Rome.

When it is objected to the Romanist that there is no evidence in the life of the baptized child different from that given by the unbaptized, sufficient to make credible a change so enormous, he replies, as in the case of the other sacrament, — The miracle is invisible. You cannot see the bread and wine become flesh and blood; but the flesh and blood are there, whether you see them or not. You cannot see the effects of

regeneration; but they are there, hidden, whether visible to you or not. In other words, Christ has declared that it is with every one born of the Spirit as with the wind — "*Thou hearest the sound thereof.*" But the Romanist distinctly holds that you *cannot* hear the sound; that the wind hath blown, but there is no sound; that the Spirit hath descended, and there are no fruits whereby the tree is known.

In examining this view, at the outset, we deprecate those vituperative and ferocious expressions which are used so commonly against the church of Rome; — unbecoming in private conversation, disgraceful on the platform, they are still more unpardonable in the pulpit. I am not advocating that feeble softness of mind which cannot speak strongly because it cannot feel strongly. I know the value, and, in their place, the need of strong words. I know that the Redeemer used them: stronger and keener never fell from the lips of man. I am aware that our Reformers used coarse and vehement language; but we do not imbibe the Reformers' spirit by the mere adoption of the Reformers' language, — nay, paradoxical as it may seem, the use of their language even proves a degeneracy from their spirit. You will find harsh and gross expressions enough in the Homilies; but remember that when they spoke thus Rome was in the ascendency She had the power of fire and sword; and the men who spoke so were candidates for martyrdom, by the expressions that they used. Every one might be called upon by fire and steel to prove the quality of what was in him, and account for the high pretensions of his words. I grant the grossness. But when they spoke of the harlotries of Rome, and spoke of her adulteries,

and fornications, and lies, which she had put in full cup to the lips of nations, it was the sublime defiance of free-hearted men against oppression in high places, and falsehood dominant. But now, when Rome is no longer dominant, and the only persecutions that we hear of are the petty persecutions of Protestants among themselves, to use language such as this is not the spirit of a daring Reformer, but only the pusillanimous shriek of cruel cowardice, which keeps down the enemy whose rising it is afraid of.

We will do justice to this doctrine of Rome. It has this merit, at least, that it recognizes the character of a church; it admits it to be a society, and not an association. An association is an arbitrary union. Men form associations for temporary reasons; and, arbitrarily made, they can be arbitrarily dissolved. Society, on the contrary, is made not by will, but facts. Brotherhood, sonship, families, nations, are nature's work — real facts. Rome acknowledges this. It permits no arbitrary drawing of the lines of that which calls itself the church. A large, broad, mighty field, the Christian world; all baptized; nay, expressly, even those who are baptized by heretics. It shares the spirit, instead of monopolizing it.

Practically, therefore, in the matter of education, we should teach children on the basis on which Rome works. We say as Rome says, You are the child of God; baptism declares you such. Rome says as Paul says, "As many of you as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Consequently, we distinguish between this doctrine as held by spiritual and as held by unspiritual men. Spirituality often neutralizes error in views. Men are

better often than their creeds. The Calvinist ought to be an Antinomian, — he is not. So, in holy-minded men, this doctrine of baptismal regeneration loses its perniciousness, — nay, even becomes, in erroneous form, a precious, blessed truth.

It is quite another thing, however, held by unspiritual men. Our objections to this doctrine are:

1. Because it assumes baptism to be not the testimony to a fact, but the fact itself. Baptism *proclaims* the child of God. The Romanist says it *creates* him. Then and there a mysterious change takes place, inward, spiritual, effected by an external rite. This makes baptism not a sacrament, but an event.

2. Because it is materialism of the grossest kind. The order of Christian life is from within to that which is without, — from the spiritual truth to the material expression of it. The Roman order is from the outward to the creation of the inward. This is magic. The Jewish Cabalists believed that the pronunciation of certain magical words, engraved on the seal of Solomon, would perform marvels. The whole Eastern world fancied that such spells could transform one being into another, — a brute into a man, or a man into a brute. Books containing such trash were burnt at Ephesus, in the dawn of Christianity. But here, in the mid-day of Christianity, we have belief in such spells, — given, it is true that it is said, by God, — whereby the demoniacal nature can be exorcised, the Divine implanted in its stead, and the evil heart transformed unconsciously into a pure spirit.

Now, this is degrading God. Observe the results. A child is to be baptized on a given day; but when that day arrives, the child is unwell, and the cere-

mony must be postponed another week or month. Again a delay takes place,—the day is damp or cold. At last the time arrives; the service is read. It may require, if read slowly, five minutes more than ordinarily. Then and there, when that reading is slowly accomplished, the mystery is achieved. And all this time, while the child is ill, while the weather is bad, while the reader procrastinates,—I say it solemnly,—the Eternal Spirit who rules this universe must wait patiently, and come down, obedient to a mortal's spell, at the very second that it suits his convenience. God must wait attendance on the caprice of a careless parent, ten thousand accidents,—nay, the leisure of an indolent or an immoral priest. Will you dare insult the Majesty on High by such a mockery as this result?

3. We object, because this view makes Christian life a struggle for something that is lost, instead of a progress to something that lies before. Let no one fancy that Rome's doctrine on this matter makes salvation an easy thing. The spirit of God is given,—the germ is implanted; but it may be crushed, injured, destroyed. And her doctrine is, that venial sins after baptism are removed by absolutions and attendance on the ordinances; whereas for mortal sins there is—not no hope—but no certainty ever after until the judgment-day. Vicious men may make light of such teaching, and get periodic peace from absolution, to go and sin again; but to a spiritual Romanist this doctrine is no encouragement for laxity. Now, observe, after sin, life becomes the effort to get back to where you were years ago. It is the sad, longing glance at the Eden from which you have been expelled, which is guarded

now by a fiery sword in this world forever. And, therefore, whoever is familiar with the writings of some of the earliest leaders of the present movement Rome-wards,— writings that rank among the most touching and beautiful of English composition, — will remember the marked tone of sadness which pervades them; their high, sad longings after the baptismal purity that is gone; their mournful contemplations of a soul that once glistened with baptismal dew, now "seamed and scarred" with the indelible marks of sin. The true Christian life is ever onwards, full of trust and hope: a life wherein even past sin is no bar to saintliness, but the step by which you ascend to higher vantage-ground of holiness. The "indelible grace of baptism," — how can it teach that?

II. The second view is that held by what we, for the sake of avoiding personalities, call modern Calvinism. It draws a distinction between the visible and the invisible church. It holds that baptism admits all into the former, but into the latter only a special few. Baptismal regeneration, as applied to the first, is merely a change of state, — though what is meant by a *change* of state it were hard to say, or to determine wherein an unbaptized person admitted to all the ordinances would differ in *state* from a person baptized. The real benefit of baptism, however, only belongs to the elect. With respect to others, to predicate of them regeneration in the highest sense, is at best an ecclesiastical fiction, said "in the judgment of charity."

This view maintains that you are not God's child until you become such consciously. Not until evidence of a regenerate life is given, not until signs

of a converted soul are shown, is it right to speak of being God's child, except in this judgment of charity. Now we remark,

1. This judgment of charity ends at the baptismal font. It is never heard of in after-life. It is like the charitable judgment of the English law, which presumes, or is said to presume, a man innocent till proved guilty: valuable enough as a legal fiction; nevertheless, it does not prevent a man barring his windows, guarding his purse, keenly watching against the dealings of those around him who are presumed innocent. Similarly, the so-called judgment of charity terminates with infancy. They who speak of the church's language, in which children are called children of God, as being quite right, but only in the judgment of charity, are exactly the persons who do not in after-life charitably presume that all their neighbors are Christians. "He is not a Christian." — "She is one of the world:" or, "one of the unregenerate." Such is the language applied to those who are in baptism reckoned children of God. They *could* not consistently apply to all adults the language applied in this text: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Ye are *all* the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

2. Next, I observe that this view is identical with the Roman one in this respect, that it *creates* the fact instead of testifying to it. Only, instead of baptism, it substitutes certain views, feelings, and impressions; and asserts that these *make* the man into a child of God. The Romanist says Baptism, the Calvinist says Faith, makes that true which was not true before. It is not a fact that God is that person's Father, till in

the one case baptism, in the other faith, have made Him such.

3. Observe the pernicious results of this teaching in the matter of Education. Here again I draw the distinction between the practical consequences which legitimately ought to be and those which actually are deduced from it. Happily, men are better than their views. Hear the man speaking out of his theological system, and then hear him speaking out of the abundance of his heart. Hear the religious mother when the system is in view, and all are indiscriminately, except a certain few, corrupt, vile, with nothing good in them, heirs of ruin. But hear her talking unguardedly of her own children. They have the frailties, weaknesses, common faults, of childhood; but they have no vice in them; there is nothing base or degraded in her children! When the embraces of her child are round her neck, it will require more eloquence than you possess to convince her that she is nursing a little demon in her lap. The heart of the mother is more than a match for the creed of the Calvinist.

There are some, however, who do not shrink from consistency, and develop their doctrine in all its consequences. The children follow out their instructions with fearful fidelity. Taught that they are not the children of God till certain feelings have been developed in them, they become by degrees bewildered, or else lose their footing on reality. They hear of certain mystic joys and sorrows; and unless they fictitiously adopt the language they hear, they are painfully conscious that they know nothing of them as yet. They hear of a depression for sin which they certainly have

never experienced, — a joy in God, making his service and his house the gate of heaven; and they know that it is excessively irksome to them, — a confidence, trust, and assurance, of which they know nothing, — till they take for granted what has been told them, that they are not God's children. Taught that they are as yet of the world, they live as the world, — they carry out their education, which has dealt with them as children of the devil, to be converted; and children of the devil they become.

Of these two views, the last is by far the most certain to undermine Christianity in every Protestant country. The first, at least, assumes God's badge an universal one; and in education is so far right, practically; only wrong in the decision of the question how the child was created a child of God. But the second assumes a false, partial, party badge, — election, views, feelings. No wonder that the children of such religionists proverbially turn out ill.

III. We pass to the doctrine of the Bible, and (I believe) of the Church.

Christ came to reveal a name — the Father. He abolished the exclusive "my," and he taught to pray "our Father." He proclaimed God the Father, — man the Son: revealed that the Son of Man is also the Son of God. Man — as man, God's child. He came to redeem the world from that ignorance of the relationship which had left them in heart aliens and unregenerate. Human nature, therefore, became, viewed in Christ, a holy thing and divine. The Revelation is a common humanity, sanctified in God. The

appearance of the Son of God is the sanctification of the human race.

The development of this startled men. Sons of God! Yes; ye Jews have monopolized it too long. Is that Samaritan, heretic and alien, a child of God? Yes, the Samaritan; but not these outcasts of society? Yes; these outcasts of society. He went into the publican's house, and proclaimed that "he, too, was a son of Abraham." He suffered the sinful penitent to flood his feet with tears. He saw there the Eternal Light unquenched, — the eye, long dimmed and darkened, which yet still could read the Eternal Mind. She, too, is God's erring, but forgiven, beloved, and "much-loving" child. One step further. He will not dare to say, — the Gentiles? — the Gentiles who bow down to stocks and stones? Yes, the Gentiles too. He spake to them a parable. He told of a younger son who had lived long away from his father's home. But his forgetfulness of his father could not abrogate the fact of his being his son, and, as soon as he recognized the relationship, all the blessings of it were his own.

Now, this is the Revelation. Man is God's child, and the sin of the man consists in perpetually living as if it were false. It is the sin of the heathen, — and what is your mission to him but to tell him that he is God's child, and not living up to his privilege? It is the sin of the baptized Christian, — waiting for feelings for a claim on God. It was the false life which the Jews had led: precisely this, that they were living coërced by law. Christ had come to redeem them from the law, that they might receive the *adoption* of sons. But they were sons already, if they only knew

4. "*Because* ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, whereby ye cry Abba, Father." To be a son of God is one thing; to know that you are, and call him Father, is another, — and that is regeneration.

Now, there was wanted a permanent and authoritative pledge, revealing and confirming this; for, to mankind in the mass, invisible truths become real only when they have been made visible. All spiritual facts must have an existence in form for the human mind to rest on. This pledge is baptism. Baptism is a visible witness to the world of that which the world is forever forgetting, a common humanity united in God. Baptism authoritatively reveals and pledges to the individual that which is true of the race. Baptism takes the child and addresses it by name. Paul — no longer Saul — you are a child of God. Remember it henceforth. It is now revealed to you, and recognized by you, and to recognize God as the Father is to be regenerate (John i. 12). *You*, Paul, are now regenerate: you will have foes to fight, — the world, the flesh, and the devil, — but remember, they only keep you out of an inheritance which is your own; not an inheritance which you have to win by some new feeling or merit in yourself. It *is* yours: you *are* the child of God; you *are* a member of Christ; you *are* an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

Observe, then, baptism does not *create* a child of God. It authoritatively declares him. It does not make the fact; it only reveals it. If baptism made it a fact, then and there for the first time, baptism would be magic. Nay, faith does not create a child

of God any more than baptism, nor does it make a fact. It only appropriates that which is a fact already. For otherwise see what inextricable confusion you fall into. You ask a man to believe, and thereby be created a child of God. Believe what? That God is his Father. But God is not his Father. He is not a child of God, you say, till he believes. Then you ask him to believe a lie.

Herein lies the error, in basis identical, of the Romanist and the Calvinist. Faith is to one what baptism is to the other, the creator of a fact; whereas they both *rest* upon a fact, which is a fact whether they exist or not, — before they exist; nay, without whose previous existence both of them are unmeaning and false.

The Catechism, however, says: In baptism . . . I was *made* a child of God. Yes; coronation makes a sovereign; but, paradoxical as it may seem, it can only *make* a sovereign one who is sovereign already. Crown a pretender, that coronation will not create the king. Coronation is the authoritative act of the nation declaring a fact which was fact before. And ever after, coronation is the event to which all dates back; and the crown is the expression used for all royal acts: the crown pardons, the prerogatives of the crown, &c.

Similarly with baptism. Baptism makes a child of God in the sense in which coronation makes a king. And baptism naturally stands in Scripture for the title of regeneration and the moment of it. Only what coronation is in an earthly way, an authoritative manifestation of an invisible earthly truth, baptism is in a heavenly way — God's authoritative declaration

material form of spiritual reality. In other words, no bare sign, but a Divine Sacrament.

Now for the blessings of this view.

1. It prevents exclusiveness and spiritual pride, and all condemnation and contempt of others; for it admits those who have no spiritual capacity or consciousness to be God's children. It proclaims a kingdom, not for a few favorites, but for mankind. It protests against the idea that sonship depends on feelings. It asserts it as a broad, grand, universal, blessed fact. It bids you pray with a meaning of added majesty in the words, *Our* Father. Take care. Do not say of others that they are unregenerate — of the world. Do not make a distinction within the church of Christians and not-Christians. If you do, what do you more than the Pharisees of old? That wretched beggar that holds his hat at the crossing of the street is God's child as well as you, if he only knew it. You know it, — he does not; that is the difference; but the immortal is in him too, and the Eternal Word speaks in him. That daughter of dissipation whom you despise, spending night after night in frivolity, she, too, has a Father in Heaven. "My Father and *your* Father, my God and *your* God." She has forgotten Him, and, like the prodigal, is trying to live on the husks of the world, — the empty husks which will not satisfy, — the degrading husks which the swine did eat. But, whether she will or not, her baptism is valid, and proclaims a fact, — which may be, alas! the worse for her, if she will not have it the better.

3. This doctrine protests against the notion of our being separate units in the Divine life. The church of Calvinism is merely a collection of atoms, — a sand-

heap piled together, with no cohesion among themselves; or, a mass of steel-filings cleaving separately to a magnet, but not to each other. Baptism proclaims a church — humanity joined in Christ to God. Do not say that the separating work of baptism, drawing a distinction between the church and the world, negatives this. Do not say that, because the church is separated from the world, therefore the world are not God's children. Rather that very separation proves it. You baptize a separate body in order to realize that which is true of the collective race, as in this text — "There is neither Jew nor Greek." In all things it is the same. If you would sanctify all time, you set apart a sabbath, — not to show that other days are not intended to be sacred, but for the very purpose of making them sacred. If you would have a "nation of priests," you set apart a priesthood; not as if the priestly functions of instruction and assisting to approach God were exclusively in that body, but in order, by concentration, to bring out to greater perfection the priestly character which is shared by the whole, and then thereby make the whole more truly "priests to God to offer spiritual sacrifices." In the same way, if God would baptize humanity, He baptizes a separate church, in order that that church may baptize the race. The church is God's ideal of humanity realized.

Lastly, this doctrine of baptism sanctifies materialism. The Romanist was feeling his way to a great fact, when he said that there are other things of sacramental efficacy besides these two — baptism and the supper. The things of earth are pledges and sacraments of things in heaven. It is not for nothing that

God has selected for His sacrament the commonest of all acts, — a meal, — and the most abundant of all materials, — water. Think you that He means to say that only through two channels His spirit streams into the soul? Or is it not much more in unison with his dealings to say, that these two are set apart to signify to us the sacramental character of all nature? — just as a miracle was intended not to reveal God working there, at that death-bed and in that storm, but to call attention to His presence in every death and every storm. Go out at this spring season of the year, see the mighty preparations for life that Nature is making, feel the swelling sense of gratefulness, and the pervasive expanding consciousness of love for all Being, and then say whether this whole Form, which we call Nature, is not the great Sacrament of God, the revelation of His existence, and the channel of His communications to the spirit!

[redacted]

V.

[Preached March 17, 1850.]

BAPTISM.

1 Peter iii. 21. — "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us."

Last Sunday we considered the subject of baptism in reference to the Romish and modern Calvinistic views. The truth seemed to lie not in a middle course between the two extremes, but in a truth deeper than either of them. For there are various modifications of the Romish view which soften down its repulsive features. There are some who hold that the guilt of original sin is pardoned, but the tendencies of an evil nature remain. Others, who attribute a milder meaning to "Regeneration," understanding by it a change of state instead of a change of nature. Others, who acknowledge a certain mysterious benefit imparted by baptism, but decline determining how much grace is given, or what the exact nature of the blessing is. Others, who acknowledge that it is, in certain cases, the moment when regeneration takes place, but hold that it is conditional, occurring sometimes, not always, and following upon the condition of what they call "prevenient grace." We do not touch upon these views. They are simply modifications of the Romish

view, and, as such, more offensive than the view itself; for they contain that which is in it most objectionable, and special evils of their own besides.

We admitted the merits of the two views. We are grateful to the Romanist for the testimony which he bears to the truth of the extent of Christ's salvation; for the privilege which he gives of calling all the baptized children of God; for the protest which his doctrine makes against all party monopoly of God; for the protest against ultra-spiritualism, in acknowledging that material things are the types and channels of the Almighty Presence.

We are grateful to the Calvinist for his strong protest against formalism; for his assertion of the necessity of an inward change; for the distinction which he has drawn between being in the *state* of sons and having the *nature* of sons of God.

The error in these two systems, contrary as they are, appeared to us to be identically one and the same, — that of pretending to create a fact instead of witnessing to it. The Calvinist maintains, that on a certain day and hour, under the ministry of the Word, under preaching of some one who "proclaims the Gospel," he was born again, and God became his Father; and the Romanist declares, that on a certain day, at a certain moment by an earthly clock, by the hands of a priest apostolically ordained, the evil nature was expelled from him, and a new fact in the world was created: he attained the right of calling God his Father.

Now, if baptism makes God our Father, baptism is incantation; if faith makes him so, faith rests upon a falsehood.

For the Romanist does no more than the red Indian and the black negro pretend to do—exorcise the devil, and infuse God. The only question then becomes, Which is the true enchanter, and which is the impostor? for the juggler does, by the power of imagination, often cure the sick man; but the mysterious effects of baptism never are visible, and never can be tested in this world.

On the other hand, faith would rest upon a falsehood; for, if faith is to give the right of calling God a Father, how can you believe that which is not true the very moment before belief? God is not your Father. If you believe He is, your belief is false.

The truth which underlies these two views, on which all that is true in them rests, and in which all that is false is absorbed, is the Paternity of God. This is the Revelation of the Redeemer. This is authoritatively declared by baptism, appropriated personally by faith; but a truth independent both of baptism and faith, which would still be true if there were neither a baptism nor a faith in the world. They are the witnesses of the fact, not the creators of it.

Here, however, two difficulties arise. If this be so, do we not make light of original sin? And do we not reduce baptism into a superfluous ceremony?

Before we enter upon these questions, I must vindicate myself from the appearance of presumption. Where the wisest and holiest have held opposite views, it seems immodest to speak with unfaltering certainty and decisive tone. Hesitation, guarded statements, caution, it would seem, would be far more in place. Now, to speak decidedly is not necessarily to speak presumptuously. There are questions involv-

ing great research, and questions relating to truths beyond our ken, where guarded and uncertain tones are only a duty. There are others, where the decision has become conviction, a kind of intuition, the result of years of thought; which has been the day to a man's darkness, "the fountain-light of all his seeing;" which has interpreted him to himself, made all clear where all was perplexed before, been the key to the riddle of truths that seemed contradictory, become part of his very being, and for which, more than once, he has held himself cheerfully prepared to sacrifice all that is commonly held dear. With respect to convictions such as these, of course, the arguments by which they are enforced may be faulty, the illustrations inadequate, the power of making them intelligible very feeble, — nay, the views themselves may be wrong; but, to pretend to speak with hesitation or uncertainty respecting such convictions, would be not modesty, but affectation.

For let us remember in what spirit we are to enter on this inquiry. Not in the spirit of mere cautious orthodoxy, endeavoring to find a safe mean between two extremes, — inquiring what is the view held by the sound and judicious and respectable men, who were never found guilty of any enthusiasm, and under the shelter of whose opinion we may be secure from the charge of anything unsound. Nor in the spirit of the lawyer, patiently examining documents, weighing evidence, and deciding whether upon sufficient testimony there is such a thing as "prevenient grace" or not. Nor, once more, in the spirit of superstition. The superstitious mother of the lower classes baptizes her child in all haste, because she believes it has a

mystic influence on its health, or because she fancies that it confers the name without which it would not be summoned at the day of judgment. And the superstitious mother of the upper classes baptizes *her* child, too in all haste, because, though she does not precisely know what the mystic effect of baptism is, she thinks it best to be on the safer side, lest her child should die, and its eternity should be decided by the omission. And we go to preach to the heathen, while there are men and women in our Christian England so bewildered with systems and sermons, so profoundly in the dark respecting the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, so utterly unable to repose in Eternal Love and Justice, that they must guard their child *from* Him by a ceremony, and have the shadow of a shade of doubt whether or not, for omission of theirs, that child's Creator and Father may curse its soul for all eternity!

We are to enter upon this question as a real one of life and death; as men who feel in their bosoms sin and death, and who want to determine no theological nicety, but this: Whether we have a right to claim to be the sons of God or not? And if so, on what grounds? In virtue of a ceremony? or in virtue of a certain set of feelings? or in virtue of an Eternal Fact, — the fact of God's Paternity?

I reply to two objections.

I. The apparent denial of original sin.

II. The apparent result that baptism is nothing.

I. The text selected is a strong and distinct one. It proclaims the value of baptism. "Baptism *saves* us." But it declares that it can only be said figura-

tively. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us."

Now, the first reply I make is, that in truth the Romish view seems to make lighter of original sin than this. Methinks original sin must be a trifling thing if a little water and a few human words can do away with it: a trifling thing, if, after it is done away, there is no distinguishable difference between the baptized and unbaptized; if the unbaptized Quaker is just as likely to exhibit the fruits of goodness as the baptized son of the Church of England. We have got out of the land of reality, into the domain of figments and speculations. A fictitious guilt is done away with by a fictitious pardon; neither the appearance nor the disappearance being visible.

Original sin is an awful fact. It is not the guilt of an ancestor imputed to an innocent descendant, but it is the tendencies of that ancestor living in his offspring and incurring guilt. Original sin can be forgiven only so far as original sin is removed. It is not Adam's — it is yours; and it must cease to be yours, or else what is "taking away original sin"?

Now, he who would deny original sin must contradict all experience in the transmission of qualities. The very hound transmits his peculiarities learnt by education, and the horse of Spain his paces taught by art to his offspring, as a part of their nature. If it were not so in man, there could be no history of man as a species; no tracing out the tendencies of a race or nation; nothing but the unconnected repetitions of isolated individuals, and their lives. It is plain that the first man must have exerted on his race an influence quite peculiar; that his acts must have

biased their acts. And this bias or tendency is what we call original sin.

Now, original sin is just this denial of God's Paternity, — refusing to live as His children, and saying we are not His children. To live as His child is the true life; to live as not His child is the false life. What was the Jews' crime? Was it not this: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not;" that they *were* His own, and in act denied it, preferring to the claim of spiritual relationship the claim of union by circumcision or hereditary descent? What was the crime of the Gentiles? Was it not this: that 'when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful"? For what were they to be thankful? For being His enemies? Were they not His children, His sheep of another fold? Was not the whole falsehood of their life the worship of demons and nothings, instead of Him? Did not the parable represent them as the younger son, a wanderer from home, but still a son?

From this state Christ redeemed. He revealed God not as the Mechanic of the universe; not the Judge; but as the Father, and as the Spirit who is in man, 'lighting every man," moving in man his infinite desires and infinite affections. This was the Revelation. The reception of that revelation is Regeneration. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not; but to as many as *received* Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on His Name." They *were* His own, — yet they wanted power to become His own.

Draw a distinction, therefore, between being the child of God and realizing it. The fact is one thing·

the feeling of the fact, and the life which results from that feeling, is another. Redemption is the taking of us out of the life of falsehood into the life of truth and fact. "Of His own will begat He us by the word of Truth." But, remember, it is a truth: true, whether you believe it or not; true, whether you are baptized or not.

There are two ways in which that Revelation may be accepted. 1. By a public recognition called baptism. 2. By faith. In two ways, therefore, may it be said that man is saved. "We are saved by faith." But it is also true, figuratively, "Baptism saves us."

II. If baptism is only the public recognition and symbol of a fact, is not baptism degraded and made superfluous?

2. Baptism is given as a something to rest upon; nay, as a something without which redemption would soon become unreal: which converts a doctrine into a reality; which realizes visibly what is invisible.

For our nature is such, that immaterial truths are unreal to us until they are embodied in material form. Form almost gives them reality and being. For instance, time is an eternal fact. But time only exists to our conceptions as an actuality by measurements of materialism. When God created the sun, and moon, and stars, to serve for "signs, and for seasons, and for days and years," He was actually, so far as man was concerned, creating time. Our minds would be only floating in an eternal Now, if it were not for symbolical successions which represent the processes of thought. The clock in the house is almost a fresh creation. It realizes. The gliding heavens, and the

seasons, and the ticking clock, — what is time *to us* without them? Nothing.

God's character, again, nay, God Himself, *to us* would be nothing, if it were not for the creation, which is the great symbol and sacrament of His presence. If there were no light, no sunshine, no sea, no national and domestic life, — no material witness of His Being, — God would be to us as good as lost. The Creation *gives* us God; for, ever real in Himself, by Creation He becomes a fact *to us*.

It is in virtue, again, of this necessity in man for an outward symbol to realize an invisible Idea, that a bit of torn and blackened rag hanging from a fortress or the taffrail of a ship is a kind of life to iron-hearted men. Why is it that in the heat of battle there is one spot where the sabres flash most rapidly, and the pistol's ring is quicker, and men and officers close in most densely, and all are gathered round one man, round whose body that tattered silk is wound, and held with the tenacity of a death-struggle? Are they only children fighting for a bit of rag? That flag is everything to them: their regiment — their country — their honor — their life. Yet it is *only* a symbol! Are symbols nothing?

In the same way, baptism is a fact for man to rest upon; a doctrine realized to flesh and blood; a something in eternity which has no place in time, brought down to such time expressions as "then and there."

2. Again, baptism is the token of a church; the token of an universal church. Observe the importance of its being the sacrament of an universal church instead of the symbol of a sect. Not episcopacy, not justifi

cation by faith, nor any party badge, but "one baptism." How blessed, on the strength of this, to be able to say to the baptized dissenter, You are my brother; you anathematize my church, link popery and prelacy together, malign me, — but the same sign is on our brow, and the same Father was named over our baptism. Or, to say to a baptized Romanist, You are my brother, too, — in doctrinal error, perhaps, — in error of life, it may be, too, — but my brother, — our enemies the same, our struggle the same, our hopes and warfare the very same. Or, to the very outcast, And you, my poor, degraded friend, are my brother still, — sunk, oblivious of your high calling, — but still, whatever keeps you away from heaven keeps you from your own. You may live the false life till it is too late; but still, you only exclude yourself from your home. Of course this is very offensive. What! the Romanist my brother! the synagogue of Satan the house of God! the Spirit of God dwelling with the church of Rome! the believer in transubstantiation my brother and God's child! Yes, even so; and it is just your forgetfulness of what baptism is and means that accounts for that indignation of yours. Do you remember what the elder brother in the parable was doing? He went away sulky and gloomy, because one not half so good as himself was recognized as his father's child.

3. Baptism is seen to be no mere superfluity, when you remember that it is an authoritative symbol. Draw the distinction between an arbitrary symbol and an authoritative one — for this difference is everything.

I take once again the illustration of the coronation

act. Coronation places the crown on the brow of one who *is* sovereign. It does not make the fact; it witnesses it. Is coronation, therefore, nothing? An arbitrary symbolical act, agreed on by a few friends of the sovereign, would be nothing; but an act which is the solemn ratification of a country is everything. It realizes a fact scarcely till then felt to be real. Yet the fact was fact before, — otherwise the coronation would be invalid. Even when the third William was crowned, there was the symbol of a previous fact, — the nation's decree that he should be king; and accordingly, ever after, all is dated back to that. You talk of crown-prerogatives. You say, in your loyalty, you would bow to the crown though it hung upon a bush. Yet it is only a symbol! You only say it "in a figure." But that figure contains within it the royalty of England.

In a figure, the Bible speaks of baptism as you speak of coronation, as identical with that which it proclaims. It calls it regeneration. It says baptism saves. A grand figure, because it rests upon eternal fact. Call you that nothing?

We look to the Bible to corroborate this. In the Acts of the Apostles, Cornelius is baptized. On what grounds? To manufacture him into a child of God? or *because* he was the child of God? Did his baptism create the fact? or was the fact prior to his baptism, and the ground on which his baptism was valid? The history is this: St. Peter could not believe that a Gentile could be a child of God. But the miraculous phenomena manifested, to his astonishment, that this Gentile actually *was* God's child, — whereupon the argument of Peter was very natural: He has the

spirit; therefore baptism is superfluous! Nay, he has the spirit; therefore give him the *symbol* of the spirit. Let it be revealed to others what he is. He *is* heir to the inheritance; therefore give him the title-deed. He *is* of royal lineage, — put the crown upon his head. He *is* a child of God, — baptize him. "Who shall forbid water, seeing these have received the Holy Ghost as well as we."

One illustration more from the marriage ceremony; and I select this for two reasons: because it is the type in Scripture of the union between Christ and His church, and because the church of Rome has called it a sacrament.

A deep truth is in that error. Rome calls it a sacrament, because it is the authoritative symbol of an invisible fact. That invisible fact is the agreement of two human beings to be one. We deny it to be a sacrament, because, though it is the symbol of an invisible fact, it is not the symbol of a spiritual fact, nor an eternal fact; no spiritual truth, but only a changeful human covenant.

Now, observe the difference between an arbitrary, or conventional, and an authoritative ceremony of marriage-union. There are conventional acknowledgments of that agreement, ceremonies peculiar to certain districts, private pledges, betrothals. In the sight of God those are valid; they cannot be lightly broken without sin. You cannot in the courts of heaven distinguish between an oath to God and a word pledged to man. He said, Let your yea be yea, and your nay nay. Such an engagement cannot be infringed without penalty: the penalty of frivolized hearts, and that habit of changefulness of attachment which is the

worst of penalties. But now, additional to that, will any one say that the marriage ceremony is superfluous, — that the ring he gives his wife is nothing? It is everything. It is the authoritative ratification, by a country and before God, of that which before was, for all purposes of earth, unreal. Authoritative,— therein lies the difference. Just in that authoritativeness lies the question whether the ceremony is nothing, or everything.

And yet remember, the ceremony itself does not pretend to create the fact. It only claims to realize the fact. It admits the fact existing previously. It bases itself upon a fact. Forasmuch as two persons have consented together, and forasmuch as a token and pledge of that, in the shape of a ring, has been given, therefore — only therefore — the appointed minister *pronounces* that they are what betrothal had made them already in the sight of God.

Exactly so, the *authoritativeness* is the all in all which converts baptism from a mere ceremony into a sacrament. Baptism is not merely a conventional arrangement, exceedingly convenient, agreed on by men to remind themselves and one another that they are God's children, — but valid as a legal, eternal Truth, a condensed, embodied Fact.

Is this making baptism nothing? I should rather say baptism is everything. Baptism saves us.

One word now practically. I address myself to any one who is conscious of fault, sin-laden, struggling with the terrible question whether he has a right to claim God as his Father or not; bewildered on the one side by Romanism, on the other by Calvinism. My brother! let not either of these rob

you of your privileges. Let not Rome send you to the fearful questioning as to whether the mystic seed infused at a certain moment by an act of man remains in you still, or whether it has been so impaired by sin that henceforth there is nothing but penance, tears, and uncertainty, until the grave. Let not Calvinism send you, with terrible self-inspection, to the more dreadful task of searching your own soul for the warrant of your redemption, and deciding whether you have or not the feelings and the faith which give you a right to be one of God's elect. Better make up your mind at once you have not; you have no feelings that entitle you to that. Take your stand upon the broader, sublimer basis of God's Paternity. God created the world; God redeemed the world. Baptism proclaims separately, personally, by name, to you, God created you — God redeemed you. Baptism is your warrant, — you *are* His child. And now, because you are His child, live as a child of God; be redeemed from the life of evil, which is false to your nature, into the Life of Light and Goodness, which is the Truth of your Being. Scorn all that is mean; hate all that is false; struggle with all that is impure. Love whatsoever "things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report;" certain that God is on your side, and that whatever keeps you from Him keeps you from your own Father. Live the simple, lofty life which befits an heir of immortality.

VI.

[Preached October 13, 1850.]

ELIJAH.

1 Kings xix. 4. — "But he himself went on a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree; and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough: now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers."

It has been observed of the holy men of Scripture, that their most signal failures took place in those points of character for which they were remarkable in excellence. Moses was the meekest of men; but it was Moses who "spake unadvisedly with his lips." St. John was the apostle of charity; yet he is the very type to us of religious intolerance, in his desire to call down fire from heaven. St. Peter is proverbially the apostle of impetuous intrepidity; yet twice he proved a craven. If there were anything for which Elijah is remarkable, we should say it was superiority to human weakness. Like the Baptist, he dared to arraign and rebuke his sovereign; like the commander who cuts down the bridge behind him, leaving himself no alternative but death or victory, he taunted his adversaries, the priests of Baal, on Mount Carmel, making them gnash their teeth and cut themselves with knives, but at the same time insuring for himself a terrible end,

in case of failure, from his exasperated foes. And again, in his last hour, when he was on his way to a strange and unprecedented departure from this world, when the whirlwind and flame-chariot were ready, he asked for no human companionship. The bravest men are pardoned if one lingering feeling of human weakness clings to them at the last, and they desire a human eye resting on them, a human hand in theirs, a human presence. But Elijah would have rejected all. In harmony with the rest of his lonely, severe character, he desired to meet his Creator alone. Now, it was this man, — so stern, so iron, so independent, so above all human weakness, — of whom it is recorded that in his trial hour he gave way to a fit of petulance and querulous despondency to which there is scarcely found a parallel. Religious despondency, therefore, is our subject.

I. The causes of Elijah's despondency.

II. God's treatment of it.

I. The causes of Elijah's despondency.

1. Relaxation of physical strength.

On the reception of Jezebel's message, Elijah flies for his life; toils on the whole day; sits down under a juniper-tree, faint, hungry, and travel-worn; the gale of an oriental evening, damp and heavy with languid sweetness, breathing on his face. The prophet and the man give way. He longs to die; you cannot mistake the presence of causes in part purely physical.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made. Of that constitution, which in our ignorance we call union of soul and body, we know little respecting what is cause and what effect. We would fain believe that the mind

has power over the body; but it is just as true that the body rules the mind. Causes apparently the most trivial — a heated room, want of exercise, a sunless day, a northern aspect — will make all the difference between happiness and unhappiness, between faith and doubt, between courage and indecision. To our fancy there is something humiliating in being thus at the mercy of our animal organism. We would fain find nobler causes for our emotions. We talk of the hiding of God's countenance, and the fiery darts of Satan. But the picture given here is true. The body is the channel of our noblest emotions as well as our sublimest sorrows.

Two practical results follow. First, instead of vilifying the body, complaining that our nobler part is chained down to a base partner, it is worth recollecting that the body, too, is the gift of God, in its way Divine, — "the temple of the Holy Ghost;" and that to keep the body in temperance, soberness, and chastity, to guard it from pernicious influence, and to obey the laws of health, are just as much religious as they are moral duties; just as much obligatory on the Christian as they are on a member of a Sanitary Committee. Next, there are persons melancholy by constitution, in whom the tendency is incurable; you cannot exorcise the phantom of despondency. But it is something to know that it is a phantom, and not to treat it as a reality, — something taught by Elijah's history, if we only learn from it to be patient, and wait humbly the time and good pleasure of God.

2. Want of sympathy. "I, even I only, am left." Lay the stress on *only*. The loneliness of his position was shocking to Elijah. Surprising this; for Elijah

wanted no sympathy in a far harder trial on Mount Carmel. It was in a tone of triumph that he proclaimed that he was the single, solitary prophet of the Lord, while Baal's prophets were four hundred and fifty men.

Observe, however, the difference. There was in that case an opposition which could be grappled with; here, nothing against which mere manhood was availing. The excitement was passed, — the chivalrous look of the thing gone. To die as a martyr, — yes, that were easy, in grand failure; but to die as a felon, — to be hunted, caught, taken back to an ignominious death, — flesh and blood recoiled from that.

And Elijah began to feel that popularity is not love. The world will support you when you have constrained its votes by a manifestation of power, and shrink from you when power and greatness are no longer on your side. "I, even I only, am left."

This trial is most distinctly realized by men of Elijah's stamp, and placed under Elijah's circumstances. It is the penalty paid by superior mental and moral qualities, that such men must make up their minds to live without sympathy. Their feelings will be misunderstood, and their projects uncomprehended. They must be content to live alone. It is sad to hear such appeal from the present to the judgment of the future. Poor consolation! Elijah has been judged at that bar. We are his posterity; our reverence this day is the judgment of posterity on him. But to Elijah what is that now? Elijah is in that quiet country where the voice of praise and the voice of blame are alike unheard. Elijah lived and died alone; once only the bit-

terness of it found expression. But what is posthumous justice to the heart that ached *then?*

What greater minds like Elijah's have felt intensely, all we have felt in our own degree. Not one of us but what has felt his heart aching for want of sympathy. We have had our lonely hours, our days of disappointment, and our moments of hopelessness,—times when our highest feelings have been misunderstood, and our purest met with ridicule.

Days when our heavy secret was lying unshared, like ice upon the heart. And then the spirit gives way: we have wished that all were over; that we could lie down tired, and rest like the children, from life; that the hour was come when we could put down the extinguisher on the lamp, and feel the last grand rush of darkness on the spirit.

Now, the final cause of this capacity for depression, the reason for which it is granted us, is that it may make God necessary. In such moments it is felt that sympathy beyond human is needful. Alone, the world against him, Elijah turns to God. "It is enough; now, *O Lord.*"

3. Want of occupation.

As long as Elijah had a prophet's work to do, severe as that work was, all went on healthily; but his occupation was gone. To-morrow and the day after, what has he left on earth to do? The misery of having nothing to do proceeds from causes voluntary or involuntary in their nature. Multitudes of our race, by circumstances over which they have no control, in single life or widowhood,—in straitened circumstances,—are compelled to endure lonely days, and still more lonely nights and evenings. They who

have felt the hours hang so heavy can comprehend part of Elijah's sadness.

This misery, however, is sometimes voluntarily incurred. In artificial civilization certain persons exempt themselves from the necessity of work. They eat the bread which has been procured by the sweat of the brow of others; they skim the surface of the thought which has been ploughed by the sweat of the brain of others. They are reckoned the favored ones of fortune, and envied. Are they blessed? The law of life is, In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread. No man can evade that law with impunity. Like all God's laws, it is its own executioner. It has strange penalties annexed to it. Would you know them? Go to the park, or the esplanade, or the solitude after the night of dissipation, and read the penalties of being useless in the sad, jaded, listless countenances, — nay, in the very trifles which must be contrived to create excitement artificially. Yet these very eyes could, dull as they are, beam with intelligence; on many of those brows is stamped the mark of possible nobility. The fact is, that the capacity of *ennui* is one of the signatures of man's immortality. It is his very greatness which makes inaction misery. If God had made us only to be insects, with no nobler care incumbent on us than the preservation of our lives, or the pursuit of happiness, we might be content to flutter from sweetness to sweetness, and from bud to flower. But if men with souls live only to eat and drink and be amused, is it any wonder if life be darkened with despondency?

4. Disappointment in the expectation of success. On Carmel the great object for which Elijah had lived

seemed on the point of being realized. Baal's prophets were slain; Jehovah acknowledged with one voice; false worship put down. Elijah's life-aim, the transformation of Israel into a kingdom of God, was all but accomplished. In a single day all this bright picture was annihilated.

Man is to desire success, but success rarely comes. The wisest has written upon life its sad epitaph — "All is vanity," that is, nothingness.

The tradesman sees the noble fortune for which he lived, every coin of which is the representative of so much time and labor spent, squandered by a spendthrift son. The purest statesmen find themselves at last neglected, and rewarded by defeat. Almost never can a man look back on life and say that its anticipations have been realized. For the most part life is disappointment, and the moments in which this is keenly realized are moments like this of Elijah's.

II. God's treatment of it.

1. First, he recruited his servant's exhausted strength. Read the history. Miraculous meals are given, — then Elijah sleeps, wakes, and eats: on the strength of that, goes forty days' journey. In other words, like a wise physician, God administers food, rest, and exercise; and then, and not till then, proceeds to expostulate, — for, before, Elijah's mind was unfit for reasoning.

Persons come to the ministers of God in seasons of despondency; they pervert, with marvellous ingenuity, all the consolation which is given them, turning wholesome food into poison. Then we begin to perceive the wisdom of God's simple, homely treatment of Elijah,

and discover that there are spiritual cases which are cases for the physician rather than the divine.

2. Next Jehovah calmed his stormy mind by the healing influences of Nature. He commanded the hurricane to sweep the sky, and the earthquake to shake the ground. He lighted up the heavens till they were one mass of fire. All this expressed and reflected Elijah's feelings. The mode in which Nature soothes us is by finding meeter and nobler utterance for our feelings than we can find in words, — by expressing and exalting them. In expression there is relief. Elijah's spirit rose with the spirit of the storm. Stern, wild defiance, strange joy — all by turns were imaged there. Observe, "*God* was not in the wind," nor in the fire, nor in the earthquake. It was Elijah's stormy self reflected in the moods of the tempest, and giving them their character.

. Then came a calmer hour. Elijah rose in reverence, — felt tenderer sensations in his bosom. He opened his heart to gentler influences, till at last out of the manifold voices of Nature there seemed to speak, not the stormy passions of the man, but the "still small voice" of the harmony and the peace of God.

There are some spirits which must go through a discipline analogous to that sustained by Elijah. The storm-struggle must precede the still small voice. There are minds which must be convulsed with doubt before they can repose in faith. There are hearts which must be broken with disappointment before they can rise into hope. There are dispositions which, like Job, must have all things taken from them, before they can find all things again in God. Blessed is the man who, when the tempest has spent its fury, recognizes

his Father's voice in its undertone, and bares his head and bows his knee, as Elijah did. To such spirits, generally those of a stern, rugged cast, it seems as if God had said: "In the still sunshine and ordinary ways of life you cannot meet Me; but, like Job, in the desolation of the tempest you shall see My Form, and hear My Voice, and know that your Redeemer liveth."

3. Besides, God made him feel the earnestness of life. What *doest* thou here, Elijah? Life is for doing: a prophet's life for nobler doing,— and the prophet was not doing, but moaning.

Such a voice repeats itself to all of us, rousing us from our lethargy, or our despondency, or our protracted leisure, "What doest thou here?" — here in this short life. There is work to be done; evil put down — God's church purified — good men encouraged — doubting men directed — a country saved — time going — life a dream — eternity long — one chance, and but one forever. What *doest thou* here?

Then he went on further, "Arise, go on thy way." That speaks to us: on thy way. Be up and doing — fill up every hour, leaving no crevice, nor craving for a remorse or a repentance to creep through afterwards. Let not the mind brood on self; save it from speculation, from those stagnant moments in which the awful teachings of the spirit grope into the unfathomable unknown, and the heart torments itself with questions which are insoluble except to an active life. For the awful future becomes intelligible only in the light of a felt and active present. Go, return on thy way if thou art desponding, — *on thy way*, health of spirit will return.

4. He completed the cure by the assurance of vic-

tory. "Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So, then, Elijah's life had been no failure, after all. Seven thousand at least in Israel had been braced and encouraged by his example, and silently blessed him, perhaps, for the courage which they felt. In God's world, for those that are in earnest there is no failure No work truly done, no word earnestly spoken, no sacrifice freely made, was ever made in vain. Never did the cup of cold water given for Christ's sake lose its reward.

We turn naturally from this scene to a still darker hour, and more august agony. If ever failure seemed to rest on a noble life, it was when the Son of Man, deserted by His friends, heard the cry which proclaimed that the Pharisees had successfully drawn the net round their Divine Victim. Yet, from that very hour of defeat and death there went forth the world's life, — from that very moment of apparent failure there proceeded forth into the ages the spirit of the conquering Cross. Surely, if the Cross says anything, it says that apparent defeat is real victory, and that there is a heaven for those who have *nobly and truly* failed on earth.

Distinguish, therefore, between the Real and the Apparent. Elijah's apparent success was in the shouts of Mount Carmel: his real success was in the unostentatious, unsurmised obedience of the seven thousand who had taken his God for their God.

A lesson for all. For teachers who lay their heads down at night sickening over their thankless task. Remember the power of *indirect* influences; those which distil from a life, not from a sudden, brilliant

effort. The former never fail; the latter, often. There is good done of which we can never predicate the when or where. Not in the flushing of a pupil's cheek, or the glistening of an attentive eye; not in the shining results of an examination, does your real success lie. It lies in that invisible influence on character which He alone can read who counted the seven thousand nameless ones in Israel.

For ministers, again, — what is ministerial success? Crowded churches — full aisles — attentive congregations — the approval of the religious world — much impression produced? Elijah thought so; and when he found out his mistake, and discovered that the applause on Carmel subsided into hideous stillness, his heart well-nigh broke with disappointment. Ministerial success lies in altered lives and obedient humble hearts; unseen work recognized in the judgment-day.

A public man's success? That which can be measured by feast-days, and the number of journals which espouse his cause? Deeper, deeper far must he work who works for Eternity. In the eye of That, nothing stands but gold. Real work — all else perishes.

Get below appearances, below glitter and show. Plant your foot upon reality. Not in the jubilee of the myriads on Carmel, but in the humble silence of the hearts of the seven thousand, lay the proof that Elijah had not lived in vain.

VII.

[Preached January 12, 1851.]

NOTES ON PSALM LI.

Written by David, after a double crime: Uriah put in the forefront of the battle, — the wife of the murdered man taken, &c.

A DARKER guilt you will scarcely find: kingly power abused — worst passions yielded to. Yet this psalm breathes from a spirit touched with the finest sensibilities of spiritual feeling.

Two sides of our mysterious two-fold being here. Something in us near to hell; something strangely near to God. "Half beast — half devil?" No: rather half diabolical — half divine: half demon — half God. This man mixing with the world's sins in such sort that we shudder. But he draws near the majesty of God, and becomes softened, purified, melted.

Good to observe this that we rightly estimate: generously of fallen humanity; moderately of highest saintship.

In our best estate and in our purest moments there is a something of the Devil in us, which, if it could be known, would make men shrink from us. The germs of the worst crimes are in us all. In our deepest degradation there remains something sacred, undefiled,

the pledge and gift of our better nature; a germ of indestructible life, like the grains of wheat among the cerements of a mummy, surviving through three thousand years; which *may* be planted, and live, and grow again.

It is this truth of human feeling which makes the Psalms, more than any other portion of the Old Testament, the link of union between distant ages. The historical books need a rich store of knowledge before they can be a modern book of life; but the Psalms are the records of individual experience. Personal religion is the same in all ages. The deeps of our humanity remain unruffled by the storms of ages which change the surface. This psalm, written three thousand years ago, might have been written yesterday; describes the vicissitudes of spiritual life in an Englishman as truly as of a Jew. "Not of an age, but for all time."

I. Scripture estimate of sin.

II. Spiritual restoration.

I. Scriptural estimate of sin.

1. Personal accountability. "My sin," — strange, but true. It is hard to believe the sin we do our own. One lays the blame on circumstances; another, on those who tempted; a third, on Adam, Satan, or his own nature, as if it were not himself. "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

In this psalm no such self-exculpation. Personal accountability throughout. No source of evil suggested or conceived but his own guilty will; no shifting of responsibility; no pleading of a passionate nature,

or royal exposure as peculiar. "I have sinned." "I acknowledge *my* transgression; *my* sin is ever before me."

One passage only seems at first to breathe a different tone. "In sin did my mother conceive me." By some interpreted as referring to hereditary sin; alleged as a proof of the doctrine of transmitted guilt, as if David traced the cause of his act to his maternal character.

True as the doctrine is that physical and moral qualities are transmissible, you do not find that doctrine here. It is not in excuse, but in exaggeration of his fault, that David speaks. He lays on himself the blame of a tainted nature, instead of that of a single fault: not a murderer only, but of a murderous nature. "Conceived in sin." From first moments up till then, he saw sin — sin — sin; nothing but sin.

Learn the individual character of sin, — its personal origin and personal identity. There can be no transference of it. It is individual and incommunicable. My sin cannot be your sin, nor yours mine.

Conscience, when it is healthy, ever speaks thus. "My transgression." It was not the guilt of them that tempted you. They have theirs; but each, as a separate agent, his own degree of guilt. Yours is your own; the violation of your own and not another's sense of duty; solitary, awful, unshared, adhering to you alone, of all the spirits of the universe.

Perilous to refer the evil in us to any source out of and beyond ourselves. In this way penitence becomes impossible — fictitious.

2. Estimated as hateful to God. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight;

that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest." The simple judgment of the conscience. But another estimate, born of the intellect, comes in collision with this religion, and bewilders it. Look over life, and you will find it hard to believe that sin is *against* God; that it is not rather *for* Him.

Undeniable, that out of evil comes good; that evil is the resistance in battle, with which good is created and becomes possible. Physical evil, for example. Hunger, an evil, is the parent of industry, human works, all that man has done — beautifies life. The storm-fire burns up the forest, and slays man and beast; but purifies the air of contagion. Lately, the tragic death of eleven fishermen elicited the sympathy and charities of thousands.

Even moral evil is also generative of good. Peter's cowardice enabled him to be a comforter; "when he was converted, to strengthen his brethren." David's crime was a vantage-ground, from which he rose through penitence nearer to God. Through it this psalm has blessed ages. But if the sin had not been done!

Now, contemplating this, we begin to perceive that evil is God's instrument. "If evil be in the city, the Lord hath done it." Then the contemplative intellectualist looks over this scene of things, and complacently approves of evil as God's contrivance, as much as good is; a temporary necessity, worthy of His wisdom to create. And then, can He truly hate that which He has made? Can His agent be His enemy? Is it not short-sightedness to be angry with it? Not the antagonist of God, surely, but His creature and

faithful servant, this evil. Sin cannot be "against God."

Thus arises a horrible contradiction between the instincts of the conscience and the judgment of the understanding. Judas must have been, says the intellect, God's agent as much as Paul. "Why doth He yet find fault? for who hath resisted His will? Do not evil men perform His will? Why should I blame sin in another or myself, seeing it is necessary? Why not say, at once, Crime and Virtue are the same?"

Thoughts such as these, at some time or another, I doubt not, haunt and perplex us all. Conscience is overborne by the intellect. Some time during every life, the impossibility of reconciling these two verdicts is felt, and the perplexity confuses action. Men sin with a secret peradventure behind. "Perhaps evil is not so bad after all — perhaps good — who knows?"

Remember, therefore, in matters practical, Conscience, not intellect, is our guide. Unsophisticated conscience ever speaks this language of the Bible.

We cannot help believing that our sentiments towards Right and Wrong are a reflection of God's. That we call just and true, we cannot but think is just and true in His sight. That which seems base and vile to us, we are compelled to think is so to Him; and this in proportion as we act up to duty. In that proportion we feel that His sentiments coincide with ours.

In such moments, when the God within us speaks most peremptorily and distinctly, we feel that the language of this psalm is true; and that no other language expresses the truth. Sin is not *for* God,—

cannot be; but "against God." An opposition to His will, a contradiction to His nature; not a coïncidence with it. He abhors it, — will banish it, and annihilate it.

In these days, when French sentimentalism, theological dreams, and political speculations, are unsettling the old landmarks with fearful rapidity, if we do not hold fast, and that simply and firmly, that first principle, that right is right and wrong wrong, all our moral judgments will become confused, and the penitence of the noblest hearts an absurdity. For what can be more absurd than knowingly to reproach ourselves for that which God intended?

3. Sin estimated as separation from God. Two views of sin: The first reckoning it evil, because consequences of pain are annexed; the second, evil, because a contradiction of our own nature and God's will.

In this psalm the first is ignored; the second, implied throughout. "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." — "Have mercy upon me," does not mean, Save me from torture. You cannot read the psalm and think so. It is not the trembling of a craven spirit in anticipation of torture, but the agonies of a noble one in the horror of *being* evil.

If the first view were true, then, if God were by an act of will to reverse the consequences, and annex pain to goodness and joy to crime, to lie and injure would become Duty as much as before they were sins. But penalties do not change good into evil. Good is forever good; evil is forever evil. God Himself could not alter that by a command. Eternal hell

could not make Truth wrong; nor everlasting pleasure ennoble sensuality.

Do you fancy that men like David, shuddering in sight of evil, dreaded a material hell? I venture to say, into true penitence the idea of punishment never enters. If it did, it would be almost a relief; but, O! those moments in which a selfish act has appeared more hideous than any pain which the fancy of a Dante could devise! when the idea of the strife of self-will in battle with the loving will of God, prolonged forever, has painted itself to the imagination as the real Infinite Hell! when self-concentration and the extinction of love in the soul has been felt as the real damnation of the Devil nature!

And recollect how sparingly Christianity appeals to the prudential motives. Use them it does, because they are motives — but rarely. Retribution is a truth; and Christianity, true to nature, warns of retribution. But, except to rouse men sunk in forgetfulness, or paltering with truth, it almost never appeals to it; and never with the hope of eliciting from such motives as the hope of heaven, or the fear of hell, high goodness.

To do good for reward, the Son of Man declares to be the sinner's religion. "If ye lend to them who lend to you, what thank have ye?"—and He distinctly proclaims that alone to be spiritually good, "the righteousness of God," which "does good, hoping for nothing in return;" adding, as the only motive, "that ye may be the children of (that is, resemble) your Father which is in Heaven; for He maketh His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

II. Restoration.

1. First step, — Sacrifice of a broken spirit.

Observe the accurate and even Christian perception of the real meaning of sacrifice by the ancient spiritually-minded Jews.

Sacrifice has its origin in two feelings: one human; one divine or inspired.

True feeling; something to be given to God; surrendered; that God must be worshipped with our best.

Human; added to this — mixed up with it — is the fancy that this sacrifice pleases God because of the loss or pain which it inflicts. Then men attribute to God their own revengeful feelings; think that the philosophy of sacrifice consists in the necessity of punishing; call it justice to let the blow fall somewhere, — no matter where; blood must flow. Hence, heathen sacrifices were offered to *appease* the Deity, to buy off His wrath, — the purer the offering the better. Iphigenia, — to glut His fury. Instances illustrating the feeling: Zaleucus, — two eyes given to the law; barbarian rude notions of justness mixed up with a father's instincts. Polycrates and Amasis, — seal sacrificed to avert the anger of heaven, supposed to be jealous of mortal prosperity. These notions mixed with Judaism; nay, are mixed up now with Christian conceptions of Christ's sacrifice.

Jewish sacrifices therefore presented two thoughts: — to the spiritual, true notions; to the unspiritual, false; and expressed these feelings for each. But men like David felt that what lay beneath all sacrifice, as its ground and meaning, was surrender to God's will; that a man's best is himself; and to sacrifice this

is the true sacrifice. By degrees they came to see that the sacrifice was but a form — typical; and that it might be superseded.

Compare this psalm with Psalm L.

They were taught this chiefly through sin and suffering. Conscience, truly wounded, could not be appeased by these sacrifices which were offered year by year continually. The selfish coward, who saw in sin nothing terrible but the penalty, could be satisfied, of course. Believing that the animal bore his punishment, he had nothing more to dread. But they who felt sin to be estrangement from God, who were not thinking of punishment — what relief could be given to them by being told that the *penalty* of their sins was borne by another being? They felt that only by surrender to God could conscience be at rest.

Learn, then, — God does not wish pain, but goodness; not suffering, but you — yourself — your heart.

Even in the sacrifice of Christ, God wished only this. It was precious not because it was pain; but because the pain, the blood, the death, were the last and highest evidence of entire surrender. — Satisfaction? Yes, the blood of Christ satisfied. Why? Because God can glut His vengeance in innocent blood more sweetly than in guilty? Because, like the barbarian Zaleucus, so long as the whole penalty is paid, He cares not by whom? Or, was it because for the first time He saw human nature a copy of the Divine nature; the will of Man the Son perfectly coincident with the will of God the Father; the Love of Deity for the first time exhibited by man; obedience entire, "unto death, even the death of the cross"? Was that the sacrifice which He saw in His beloved

Son wherewith He was well pleased? Was that the sacrifice of Him who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God; the sacrifice once offered which hath perfected forever them that are sanctified?

2. Last step,—Spirit of Liberty. Thy free spirit,—literally, princely. But the translation is right. A princely is a free spirit; unconstrained. Hence, St. James, "the royal law of liberty."

Two classes of motives may guide to acts of seeming goodness:—1. Prudential. 2. Generous.

The agent of the Temperance Society appeals to prudential motives when he demonstrates the evils of intoxication; enlists the aid of anatomy; contrasts the domestic happiness and circumstantial comfort of the temperate home with that of the intemperate.

An appeal to the desire of happiness and fear of misery. A motive, doubtless; and of unquestionable potency. All I say is, that from this class of motives comes nothing of the highest stamp.

Prudential motives will move men; but compare the rush of population from east to west for gold with a similar rush in the time of the Crusades. A dream—a fancy; but an appeal to generous and unselfish emotions; to enthusiasm which has in it no reflex consideration of personal greed. In the one case, simply a transfer of population, with vices and habits unchanged; in the other, a sacrifice of home, country, all.

Tell men that salvation is personal happiness, and damnation personal misery, and that goodness consists in seeking the one and avoiding the other, and you will get religionists; but poor, stunted, dwarfish,—

asking, with painful self-consciousness, Am
am I lost? Prudential considerations abou.
happiness, conflicting with passionate impulses
secure a near and present one; men moving
shackles, — "letting I dare not wait upon I would."

Tell men that God is Love; that Right is
and Wrong Wrong; let them cease to admire
thropy, and begin to love men; cease to pant
heaven, and begin to love God: then the spirit of
erty begins.

When fear has done its work, — whose office is
to create holiness, but to arrest conscience, — and
abasement has set in in earnest, then the Free Spi
of God begins to breathe upon the soul like a ga
from a healthier climate, refreshing it with a more
generous and a purer love. Prudence is no longer
left in painful and hopeless struggle with desire:
Love bursts the shackles of the soul, and we are free

VIII.

[Preached March 2, 1851.]

OBEDIENCE THE ORGAN OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

John vii. 17. — "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

THE first thing we have to do is to put ourselves in possession of the history of these words.

Jesus taught in the temple during the Feast of Tabernacles. The Jews marvelled at His spiritual wisdom. The cause of wonder was the want of scholastic education: "How knoweth this man letters, never having learned?" They had no conception of any source of wisdom beyond learning.

He Himself gave a different account of the matter. "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." And how he came possessed of it, speaking humanly, He taught (chap. v. 30): "My judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

That principle whereby He attained spiritual judgment or wisdom He extends to all. "If *any* man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." Here, then, manifestly, there are two opinions respecting the origin of spiritual knowledge:

1. The popular one of the Jews: relying on a cultivated understanding.

2. The principle of Christ, which relied on trained affections and habits of obedience.

What is Truth? Study, said the Jews. Act, said Christ, and you shall know. A very precious principle to hold by in these days; and a very pregnant one of thought to us, who during the next few days must be engaged in the contemplation of crime, and to whom the question will suggest itself, How can men's lives be made true?

Religious controversy is fast settling into a conflict between two great extreme parties: those who believe everything, and those who believe nothing—the disciples of credulity, and the disciples of scepticism.

The first rely on authority.

Foremost among these, and the only self-consistent ones, are the adherents of the Church of Rome: and into this body, by logical consistency, ought to merge all — Dissenters, Churchmen, Bible Christians — who receive their opinions because their sect, their church, or their documents, assert them, not because they are true eternally in themselves.

The second class rely solely on a cultivated understanding. This is the root-principle of Rationalism. Enlighten, they say, and sin will disappear. Enlighten, and we shall know all that can be known of God. Sin is an error of the understanding, not a crime of the will. Illuminate the understanding, show man that sin is folly, and sin will disappear. Political Economy will teach public virtue; knowledge of anatomy will arrest the indulgence of the

passions Show the drunkard the inflamed tissues of the brain, and he will be sobered by fear and reason.

Only enlighten, and spiritual truths will be tested. When the anatomist shall have hit on a right method of dissection, and appropriated sensation to this filament of the brain, and the religious sentiment to that fibre, we shall know whether there be a soul or not, and whether consciousness will survive physical dissolution. When the chemist shall have discovered the principle of life, and found cause behind cause, we shall know whether the last cause of All is a Personal Will or a lifeless Force.

Concerning whom I only remark now, that these disciples of scepticism become easily disciples of credulity. It is instructive to see how they who sneer at Christian mysteries as old wives' fables bow in abject reverence before Egyptian mysteries of three thousand years' antiquity; and how they who have cast off a God believe in the veriest imposture, and have blind faith in this most vulgar juggling. Scepticism and credulity meet. Nor is it difficult to explain. Dis trusting everything, they doubt their own conclusions and their own mental powers; and that for which they cannot account presents itself to them as super natural and mysterious. Wonder makes them more credulous than those they sneer at.

In opposition to both these systems, stands the Christianity of Christ.

1. Christ never taught on personal authority. "My doctrine is not mine." He taught "not as the scribes." They dogmatized: because "it was written," stickled for maxims, and lost principles. His

authority was the authority of Truth, not of personality: He commanded men to believe, not because He said it; but he said it because it was true. Hence John xii. 47, 48, "If any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

2. He never taught that cultivation of the understanding would do all; but exactly the reverse. And so taught His apostles. St. Paul taught, — "The world by wisdom knew not God." His Master said, not that clear intellect will give you a right heart, but that a right heart and a pure life will clarify the intellect. Not, Become a man of letters and learning, and you will attain spiritual freedom; but, Do rightly, and you will judge justly: Obey, and you will know. — "My judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which sent me." — "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

I. The knowledge of the Truth, or Christian knowledge.

II. The condition on which it is attainable.

Christian knowledge, — "he shall know." Its object, — "the doctrine." Its degree, certainty, — "shall *know*."

Doctrine is now, in our modern times, a word of limited meaning, being simply opposed to practical. For instance, the Sermon on the Mount would be called practical; St. Paul's epistles, doctrinal. But in Scripture doctrine means broadly teaching; anything that is taught is doctrine. Christ's doctrine embraces

the whole range of his teaching — every principle and every precept. Let us select three departments of "doctrine" in which the principle of the text will be found true. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

1. It holds good in speculative truth. If any man will do God's will, he shall know what is truth and what is error. Let us see how wilfulness and selfishness hinder impartiality. How comes it that men are almost always sure to arrive at the conclusions reached by their own party? Surely because fear, interest, vanity, or the desire of being reckoned sound and judicious, or party spirit, bias them. Personal prospects, personal antipathies — these determine most men's creed. How will you remove this hindrance? By increased cultivation of mind? Why, the Romanist is as accomplished as the Protestant, and learning is found in the Church and out of it. You are not sure that that high mental cultivation will lead a man either to Protestantism or the Church of England. Surely, then, by removing self-will, and so only, can the hindrance to right opinions be removed. Take away the last trace of interested feeling, and the way is cleared for men to come to an approximation towards unity, even in judgment on points speculative; and so he that will do God's will shall know of the doctrine.

2. In practical truths the principle is true. It is more true to say that our opinions depend upon our lives and habits, than to say that our lives depend upon our opinions, which is only now and then true. The fact is, men think in a certain mode on these matters, because their life is of a certain character,

and their opinions are only invented afterwards as a defence for their life.

For instance, St. Paul speaks of a maxim among the Corinthians, — "Let us eat and drink, *for* to-morrow we die." They excused their voluptuousness on the ground of its consistency with their sceptical creed. Life was short. Death came to-morrow. There was no hereafter. Therefore it was quite consistent to live for pleasure. But who does not see that the creed was the result, and not the cause, of the life? Who does not see that *first* they ate and drank, and *then* believed to-morrow we die? "Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers." Eating and drinking, we lose sight of the life to come. When the immortal is overborne and smothered in the life of the flesh, how can men believe in the life to come? Then disbelieving, they mistook the cause for the effect. Their moral habits and creed were in perfect consistency; yet it was the life that formed the creed, not the creed that formed the life. Because they were sensualists, immortality had become incredible.

Again, slavery is defended philosophically. The negro on his skull and skeleton, they say, has God's intention of his servitude written; he is the inferior animal, therefore it is right to enslave him. Did this doctrine precede the slave-trade? Did man arrive at it, and then, in consequence, conscientiously proceed with human traffic? Or, was it invented to defend a practice existing already, — the offspring of self-interest? Did not men first make slaves, and then search about for reasons to make their conduct plausible to themselves?

So, too, a belief in predestination is sometimes

alleged in excuse of crime. But a man who suffers his will to be overpowered naturally comes to believe that he is the sport of fate; feeling powerless, he believes that God's decree has made him so. But let him but put forth one act of loving will, and then, as the nightmare of a dream is annihilated by an effort, so the incubus of a belief in tyrannous destiny is dissipated the moment a man wills to do the Will of God. Observe, how he knows of the doctrine, directly he does the Will.

There is another thing said respecting this knowledge of Truth. It respects the degree of certainty, — "he shall *know*," not he shall have an opinion. There is a wide distinction between supposing and knowing; between fancy and conviction; between opinion and belief. Whatever rests on authority remains only supposition. You have an opinion when you know what others think. You *know* when you feel. In matters practical you know only so far as you can do. Read a work on the "Evidences of Christianity," and it may become highly probable that Christianity, &c., are true. That is an opinion. Feel God; do His will till the Absolute Imperative within you speaks as with a living voice, — thou shalt, and thou shalt not; and then you do not think — you *know* — that there is God. That is a conviction and a belief.

Have we never seen how a child, simple and near to God, cuts asunder a web of sophistry with a single direct question? How, before its steady look and simple argument, some fashionable utterer of a conventional falsehood has been abashed? How a believing Christian scatters the forces of scepticism, as a morning ray, touching the mist on the mountain side,

makes it vanish into thin air? And there are few more glorious moments of our humanity than those in which Faith does battle against intellectual proof, when, for example, after reading a sceptical book, or hearing a cold-blooded materialist's demonstration, in which God, the soul, and life to come, are proved impossible, up rises the heart, in all the giant might of its immortality, to do battle with the understanding, and with the simple argument, "I *feel* them in my best and highest moments to be true," annihilates the sophistries of logic.

These moments of profound faith do not come once for all; they vary with the degree and habit of obedience. There is a plant which blossoms once in a hundred years. Like it, the soul blossoms only now and then in a space of years; but these moments are the glory and the heavenly glimpses of our purest humanity.

II. The condition on which knowledge of truth is attainable. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

This universe is governed by laws. At the bottom of everything here there is a law. Things are in this way, and not that: we call that a law or condition. All departments have their own laws. By submission to them you make them your own. Obey the laws of the body — such laws as say, Be temperate and chaste. Or of the mind — such laws as say, Fix the attention, strengthen by exercise; and then their prizes are yours, — health, strength, pliability of muscle, tenaciousness of memory, nimbleness of imagina-

tion, &c. Obey the laws of your spiritual being, and it has its prizes, too. For instance, the condition or law of a peaceful life is submission to the laws of meekness: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The condition of the Beatific Vision is a pure heart and life: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." To the impure, God is simply invisible. The condition annexed to a sense of God's presence — in other words, that without which a sense of God's presence cannot be — is obedience to the laws of Love: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His Love is perfected in us." The condition of spiritual wisdom and certainty in truth is obedience to the will of God — surrender of private will: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

In every department of knowledge, therefore, there is an appointed "organ," or instrument for discovery of its specific truth, and for appropriating its specific blessings. In the world of sense, the empirical intellect; in that world the Baconian philosopher is supreme. His Novum Organon is experience; he knows by experiment of touch, sight, &c. The religious man may not contravene his assertions, — he is lord in his own province. But in the spiritual world the "organ" of the scientific man, sensible experience, is powerless. If the chemist, geologist, physiologist, come back from their spheres and say, We find in the laws of affinity, in the deposits of past ages, in the structure of the human frame, no trace nor token of a God, I simply reply, I never expected you would. Obedience and self-surrender is the sole organ by which we gain a

knowledge of that which cannot be seen nor felt. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." . . . . And just as by copying perpetually a master painter's works we get at last an instinctive and infallible power of recognizing his touch, so, by copying and doing God's will, we recognize what is His, — we know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether it be an arbitrary invention of a human self.

2. Observe the universality of the law. "If *any* man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." The law was true of the Man Christ Jesus Himself. He tells us it is true of all other men.

In God's universe there are no favorites of heaven who may transgress the laws of the universe with impunity; none who can take fire in the hand and not be burnt; no enemies of heaven who if they sow corn will reap nothing. The law is just and true to all: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

In God's spiritual universe there are no favorites of heaven who can attain knowledge and spiritual wisdom apart from obedience. There are none reprobate by an eternal decree, who can surrender self, and in all things submit to God, and yet fail of spiritual convictions. It is not, therefore, a rare, partial condescension of God, arbitrary and causeless which gives knowledge of the Truth to some, and shuts it out from others; but a vast, universal, glorious law. The light lighteth every man that cometh into the world. "If any man will do His will, he shall know."

See the beauty of this Divine arrangement. If the

certainty of truth depended upon the proof of miracles, prophecy, or the discoveries of science, then Truth would be in the reach chiefly of those who can weigh evidence, investigate history and languages, study by experiment; whereas, as it is, "The *meek* will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way." — "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." The humblest and the weakest may know more of man, of moral evil and of good, by a single act of charity, or a prayer of self-surrender, than all the sages can teach; ay, or all the theologians can dogmatize upon.

They know nothing, perhaps, these humble ones, of evidence; but they are sure that Christ is their Redeemer. They cannot tell what matter is; but they know that they are Spirits. They know nothing of the argument from design; but they feel God. The truths of God are spiritually discerned. They have never learned letters; but they have reached the Truth of Life.

3. Annexed to this condition, or a part of it, is earnestness. "If any man *will* do His will." Now, that word "will" is not the will of the future tense, but will meaning volition. If any man wills, resolves, has the mind to do the will of God. So, then, it is not a chance, fitful obedience that leads us to the Truth, nor an obedience paid while happiness lasts and no longer, — but an obedience rendered in entireness and in earnest. It is not written, If any man does His will, — but if any man has the spirit and desire. If we are in earnest we shall persevere, like

the Syrophenician woman, even though the ear of the universe seem deaf, and Christ himself appear to bid us back. If we are not in earnest, difficulties will discourage us. Because will is wanting, we shall be asking, still in ignorance and doubt, What is truth?

All this will seem to many time misspent. They go to church because it is the custom; all Christians believe it is the established religion. But there are hours — and they come to us all at some period of life or other — when the hand of Mystery seems to lie heavy on the soul; when some life-shock scatters existence, — leaves it a blank and dreary waste henceforth forever, and there appears nothing of hope in all the expanse which stretches out, except that merciful gate of death which opens at the end; — hours when the sense of misplaced or ill-requited affection, the feeling of personal worthlessness, the uncertainty and meanness of all human aims, and a doubt of all human goodness, unfix the soul from all its old moorings, and leave it drifting, drifting over the vast Infinitude, with an awful sense of solitariness. Then the man whose faith rested on outward Authority, and not on inward life, will find it give way, — the authority of the Priest; the authority of the Church; or merely the authority of a document proved by miracles and backed by prophecy; the soul, — conscious life hereafter, — God, — will be an awful desolate Perhaps. Well, in such moments you doubt all, — whether Christianity be true; whether Christ was man, or God, or a beautiful fable. You ask bitterly, like Pontius Pilate, What is Truth? In such an hour what remains? I reply, Obedience. Leave those thoughts for the present. Act: be merciful and gentle — honest; force yourself

to abound in little services; try to do good to others; be true to the Duty that you know. *That* must be right, whatever else is uncertain. And by all the laws of the human heart, by the word of God, you shall not be left to doubt. Do that much of the will of God which is plain to you, "You shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God."

IX.

[Preached March 30, 1851.]

RELIGIOUS DEPRESSION.

PSALM xlii. 1–3. — "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?"

THE value of the public reading of the Psalms, is, that they express for us indirectly those deeper feelings which there would be a sense of indelicacy in expressing directly.

Example of Joseph: asking after his father, and blessing his brothers, as it were under the personality of another.

There are feelings of which we do not speak to each other; they are too sacred and too delicate. Such are most of our feelings to God. If we do speak of them, they lose their fragrance, — become coarse; nay, there is even a sense of indelicacy and exposure.

Now, the Psalms afford precisely the right relief for this feeling. Wrapped up in the forms of poetry (metaphor, &c.), that which might seem exaggerated is excused by those who do not feel it; while they who do

can read them, applying them, without the suspicion of uttering *their own* feelings. Hence their soothing power; and hence, while other portions of Scripture may become obsolete, they remain the most precious parts of the Old Testament. For the heart of man is the same in all ages.

This forty-second Psalm contains the utterance of a sorrow of which men rarely speak. There is a grief worse than lack of bread or loss of friends; man in former times called it spiritual desertion. But at times the utterances of this solitary grief are, as it were, overheard, as in this Psalm. Read verses 6–7. And in a more august agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

I. Causes of David's despondency.

II. The consolation.

I. Causes of David's despondency.

1. The thirst for God. "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?"

There is a desire in the human heart best described as the cravings of infinitude. We are so made that nothing which has limits satisfies.

Hence the sense of freedom and relief which comes from all that suggests the idea of boundlessness, — the deep sky, the dark night, the endless circle, the illimitable ocean.

Hence, too, our dissatisfaction with all that is or can be done. There never was the beauty yet, than which we could not conceive something more beautiful. None so good as to be faultless in our eyes. No deed done by us, but we feel we have it in us to do a

better. The heavens are not clean in our sight; and the angels are charged with folly.

Therefore, to never rest is the price paid for our greatness. Could we rest, we must become smaller in soul. Whoever is satisfied with what he does has reached his culminating point—he will progress no more. Man's destiny is to be not dissatisfied, but forever unsatisfied.

Infinite goodness,— a beauty beyond what eye hath seen or heart imagined, a justice which shall have no flaw, and a righteousness which shall have no blemish, —to crave for that, is to be "athirst for God."

2. The temporary loss of the sense of God's personality. "My soul is athirst for the living God."

Let us search our own experience. What we want is, we shall find, not infinitude, but a boundless One, not to feel that love is the *law* of this universe, but to feel One whose name is Love.

For else, if in this world of order there be no One in whose bosom that order is centred, and of whose Being it is the expression,—in this world of manifold contrivance, no Personal Affection which gave to the skies their trembling tenderness, and to the snow its purity,— then order, affection, contrivance, wisdom, are only horrible abstractions, and we are in the dreary universe alone.

Foremost in the declaration of this truth was the Jewish religion. It proclaimed not, "Let us meditate on the Adorable light, it shall guide our intellects,"—which is the most sacred verse of the Hindoo Sacred books,—but "Thus saith the Lord, I am that I am." In that word, I am, is declared Personality; and it contains, too, in the expression Thus *saith*, the real

idea of a Revelation, namely, the voluntary approach of the Creator to the creature.

Accordingly, these Jewish Psalms are remarkable for that personal tenderness towards God, — those outbursts of passionate, individual attachment which are in every page. A person asking and giving heart for heart, — inspiring love, because feeling it, — that was the Israelite's Jehovah.

Now, distinguish this from the God of the philosopher, and the God of the mere theologian.

The God of the mere theologian is scarcely a living God. He did live; but for some eighteen hundred years we are credibly informed that no trace of His life has been seen. The canon is closed. The proofs that He was are in the things that He has made, and the books of men to whom He spake; but He inspires and works wonders no more. According to the theologians, He gives us proofs of design instead of God — doctrines instead of the life indeed.

Different, too, from the God of the philosopher. The tendency of philosophy has been to throw back the personal Being further and still further from the time when every branch and stream was believed a living Power, to the period when "principles" were substituted for this belief; then "Laws;" and the philosopher's God is a law into which all other laws are resolvable.

Quite differently to this speaks the Bible of God. Not as a law; but as the Life of all that is; the Being who feels and is felt, — is loved and loves again; feels my heart throb into His; counts the hairs of my head; feeds the ravens, and clothes the lilies; hears my

prayers, and interprets them through a Spirit which has affinity with my spirit.

It is a dark moment when the sense of that personality is lost; more terrible than the doubt of immortality. For, of the two, — eternity without a personal God, or God for seventy years without immortality, — no one after David's heart would hesitate: "Give me God for life, to know and be known by Him." No thought is more hideous than that of an eternity without Him. "My soul is athirst for God." The desire of immortality is second to the desire for God.

3. The taunts of scoffers. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Now, the hart here spoken of is the hart hunted, at bay, the big tears rolling from his eyes, and the moisture standing black upon his side. Let us see what the persecution was. "Where is now thy God?"—ver. 3. This is ever the way in religious perplexity: the unsympathizing world taunts or misunderstands. In spiritual grief, they ask, Why is he not like others? In bereavement, they call your deep sorrow unbelief. In misfortune, they comfort you, like Job's friends, by calling it a visitation. Or, like the barbarians at Melita, when the viper fastened on Paul's hand, no doubt they call you an infidel, though your soul be crying after God. Specially in that dark and awful hour, "Eloi, Eloi," *He* called on God; they said, "Let be; let us see whether Elias will come to save Him."

Now, this is sharp to bear. It is easy to say Christian fortitude should be superior to it. But in darkness to have no sympathy — when the soul gropes for God, to have the hand of man relax its grasp? For-eat-flies, small as they are, drive the noble war-horse

mad; therefore, David says, "as a sword in my bones" (ver. 10). Now, observe, this feeling of forsakenness is no proof of being forsaken. Mourning after an absent God is an evidence of love as strong as rejoicing in a present one. Nay, further, a man may be more decisively the servant of God and goodness while doubting His existence, and in the anguish of his soul crying for light, than while resting in a common creed, and coldly serving Him. There has been one, at least, whose apparent forsakenness, and whose seeming doubt, bears the stamp of the majesty of Faith. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

II. David's consolation.

1. And first, in hope (see ver. 5); distinguish between the *feelings* of faith that God is present, and the *hope* of faith that He will be so.

There are times when a dense cloud veils the sunlight; you cannot see the sun, nor feel him. Sensitive temperaments feel depression, and that unaccountably and irresistibly. No effort can make you *feel*. Then you hope. Behind the cloud the sun is; from thence he will come; the day drags through, the darkest and longest night ends at last. Thus we bear the darkness and the otherwise intolerable cold, and many a sleepless night. It does not shine now, but it will. So, too, spiritually.

There are hours in which physical derangement darkens the windows of the soul; days in which shattered nerves make life simply endurance; months and years in which intellectual difficulties, pressing for solution, shut out God. Then faith must be replaced by hope. "What I do thou knowest not now; but

thou shalt know hereafter." Clouds and darkness are round about Him; *but* Righteousness and Truth are the habitation of His throne. "My soul, hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

2. This hope was *in God.*

The mistake we make is to look for a source of comfort in ourselves: self-contemplation, instead of gazing upon God. In other words, we look for comfort precisely where comfort never can be.

For, first, it is impossible to derive consolation from our own feelings, because of their mutability: to-day we are well, and our spiritual experience, partaking of these circumstances, is bright: but to-morrow some outward circumstances change, — the sun does not shine, or the wind is chill, — and we are low, gloomy, and sad. Then, if our hopes were unreasonably elevated, they will now be unreasonably depressed; and so our experience becomes flux and reflux, ebb and flow, like the sea, that emblem of instability.

Next, it is impossible to get comfort from our own acts; for, though acts are the test of character, yet in a low state no man can judge justly of his own acts. They assume a darkness of hue which is reflected on them by the eye that contemplates them. It would be well for all men to remember that sinners cannot judge of sin, least of all can we estimate our own sin.

Besides, we lose time in remorse. I have sinned. — Well — by the grace of God I must endeavor to do better for the future. But if I mourn for it overmuch, all to-day, refusing to be comforted, to-morrow I shall have to mourn the wasted to-day; and that again will be the subject of another fit of remorse.

In the wilderness, had the children of Israel, instead of gazing on the serpent, looked down on their own wounds, to watch the process of the granulation of the flesh, and see how deep the wound was, and whether it was healing slowly or fast, cure would have been impossible: their only chance was to look off the wounds. Just so, when, giving up this hopeless and sickening work of self-inspection, and turning from ourselves in Christian self-oblivion, we gaze on God, then first the chance of consolation dawns.

He is not affected by our mutability; our changes do not alter Him. When we are restless, He remains serene and calm; when we are low, selfish, mean, or dispirited, He is still the unalterable I AM — the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. What God is in Himself — not what we may chance to feel Him in this or that moment to be — that is our hope. "My soul, hope thou *in God*."

X.

[Preached April 6, 1851.]

FAITH OF THE CENTURION.

MATT. viii. 10. —"When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

THAT upon which the Son of God fastened as worthy of admiration was not the centurion's benevolence, nor his perseverance, but his faith. And so speaks the whole New Testament, giving a special dignity to faith. By faith we are justified. By faith man removes mountains of difficulty. As the Divinest attribute in the heart of God is Love, and the mightiest, because the most human, principle in the breast of man is Faith, Love is heaven, Faith is that which appropriates heaven.

Faith is a theological term, rarely used in other matters. Hence its meaning is obscured. But faith is no strange, new, peculiar power, supernaturally infused by Christianity; but the same principle by which we live from day to day — one of the commonest in our daily life.

We trust our senses; and that though they often deceive us. We trust men; a battle must often be risked on the intelligence of a spy. A merchant com-

mits his ships, with all his fortunes on board, to a hired captain, whose temptations are enormous. Without this principle society could not hold together for a day. It would be a sand-heap.

Such, too, is religious faith. We trust on probabilities; and this though probabilities often are against us. We cannot prove God's existence. The balance of probabilities, scientifically speaking, are nearly equal for a living Person or a lifeless Cause; Immortality, &c., in the same way. But Faith throws its own convictions into the scale, and decides the preponderance.

Faith, then, is that which, when probabilities are equal, ventures on God's side and on the side of right, on the guarantee of a something within which makes the thing seem true because loved.

So defined by St. Paul: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen." The hope is the ground.

I. The faith which was commended.

II. The causes of the commendation.

I. The faith which was commended.

1. Evidence of its existence: his tenderness to his servant.

Of course this good act might have existed separate from religion. Romans were benevolent to their domestics ages before this law had been enacted regulating the relationship between patron and client.

But we are forbidden to view it so, when we remember that he was a proselyte. Morality is not religion, but it is ennobled and made more delicate by religion.

How? By instinct you may be kind to dependants.

But, if it be only by instinct, it is but the same kind of tenderness you show to your hound or horse. Disbelief in God, and Right, and Immortality, degrades the man you are kind to, to the level of the beast you feel for. Both are mortal, and for both your kindness is finite and poor.

But the moment Faith comes, dealing as it does with things infinite, it throws something of its own infinitude on the persons loved by the man of faith, upon his affections and his acts, — it raises them.

Consequently you find the centurion "building Synagogues," "caring for our (that is, the Jewish) nation," as the Repository of the Truth, — tending his servants. And this last, observe, approximated his moral goodness to the Christian standard; for therein does Christianity differ from mere religiousness, that it is not a worship of the high, but a lifting up of the low, — not hero-worship, but Divine condescension.

Thus, then, was his kindliness an evidence of his faith.

2. His humility: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof."

Now, Christ does not call this humility, though it was humility. He says, I have not found so great *faith*. Let us see why. How is humbleness the result of, or rather identical with, Faith?

Faith is trust. Trust is dependence on another, — the spirit which is opposite to independence, or trust in self. Hence, where the spirit of proud independence is, faith is not.

Now, observe how this differs from our ordinary and modern modes of thinking. The first thing taught a young man is that he must be independent. Quite

right, in the Christian sense of the word, to owe no man anything; to resolve to get his own living, and not be beholden to charity, which fosters idleness; to depend on his own exertions, and not on patronage or connection. But what is commonly meant by independence is to rejoice at being bound by no ties to other human beings; to owe no allegiance to any will except our own; to be isolated and unconnected by any feeling of intercommunion or dependence; a spirit whose very life is jealousy and suspicion; which in politics is revolutionism, and in religion atheism. This is the opposite of Christianity, and the opposite of the Christian freedom whose name it usurps. For true freedom is to be emancipated from all false lords, in order to owe allegiance to all true lords; to be free from the slavery of all lusts, so as voluntarily to serve God and Right. Faith alone frees.

And this was the freedom of the Centurion — that he *chose* his master. He was not fawning on the Emperor at Rome; nor courting the immoral ruler at Cæsarea, who had titles and places to give away; but he bent in lowliest homage of heart before the Holy One. His freedom was the freedom of uncoërced and voluntary dependence, — the freedom and humility of Faith.

3. His belief in an invisible, living will. "Speak the word only." Remark how different this is from a reliance on the influence of the senses. He asked not the presence of Christ, but simply an exertion of his will. He looked not, like a physician, to the operation of unerring laws, or the result of the contact of matter with matter. He believed in Him who is the Life indeed. He felt that the Cause of Causes is a Person.

Hence he could trust the living Will out of sight. This is the highest form of faith.

Here, however, I observe:

The Centurion learned this through his own profession. "I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me." The argument ran thus: I, by the command of will, obtain the obedience of my dependants; then, by will, the obedience of thine; sickness and health are thy servants.

Evidently he looked upon this universe with a soldier's eye; he could not look otherwise. To him this world was a mighty camp of Living Forces in which authority was paramount. Trained in obedience to military law, accustomed to render prompt submission to those above him, and to exact it from those below him, he read Law everywhere; and law to him meant nothing, unless it meant the expression of a Personal Will. It was this training through which Faith took its *form*.

The Apostle Paul tells us that the invisible things of God from the Creation of the world are clearly seen; and, we may add, from *every part* of the creation of the world, "The heavens declare the glory of God;" but so also does the buttercup and the raindrop.

The invisible things of God from life are clearly seen; and, we may add, from every department of life. There is no profession, no trade, no human occupation, which does not in its own way educate for God.

The soldier, through Law, read a personal will; and he might, from the same profession, in the unity of an army, made a living and organized unity by the variety of its parts, have read the principle of God's and

the Church's unity, through the opportunities that profession affords for self-control, for generous deeds. When the Gospel was first announced on earth, it was proclaimed to the shepherds and Magians in a manner appropriate to their modes of life.

Shepherds, like sailors, are accustomed to hear a supernatural Power in the sounds of the air, in the moaning of the night-winds, in the sighing of the storm; to see a more than mortal life in the clouds that wreathe around the headland. Such men, brought up among the sights and sounds of nature, are proverbially superstitious. No wonder, therefore, that the intimation came to them, as it were, on the winds in the melodies of the air: "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

But the Magians, being astrologers, accustomed to read the secrets of Life and Death in the clear starlit skies of Persia, are conducted by a meteor.

Each in his own way; each in his own profession; each through that little spot of the universe given to him. For not only is God everywhere, but all of God is in every point. Not His wisdom here, and His goodness there; the whole truth may be read, if we had eyes, and heart, and time enough, in the laws of a daisy's growth. God's Beauty, His Love, His Unity; nay, if you observe how each atom exists, not for itself alone, but for the sake of every other atom in the universe, in that atom or daisy you may read the law of the Cross itself. The crawling of a beetle before now has taught perseverance, and led to a crown. The little moss, brought close to a traveller's eye in an

African desert, who had lain down to die, roused him to faith in that Love which had so curiously arranged the minute fibres of a thing so small, to be seen once and but once by a human eye, and carried him, like Elijah of old, in the strength of that heavenly repast, a journey of forty days and forty nights to the sources of the Nile; yet who could have suspected divinity in a beetle, or theology in a moss?

II. The causes of the astonishment.

The reasons why he marvelled may be reduced under two heads.

1. The Centurion was a Gentile; therefore unlikely to know revealed truth.

2. A soldier, and therefore exposed to recklessness, and idleness, and sensuality, which are the temptations of that profession. But he turned his loss to glorious gain.

The Saviour's comment, therefore, contained the advantage of disadvantages, and the disadvantages of advantages. The former, "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." The latter, "The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

There are spirits which are crushed by difficulties; others would gain strength from them. The greatest men have been those who have cut their way to success through difficulties. And such have been the greatest triumphs of art and science; such too of religion. Moses, Elijah, Abraham, the Baptist, the giants of both Testaments, were not men nurtured in the hothouse of

religious advantages. Many a man would have done good if he had not a superabundance of the means of doing it. Many a spiritual giant is buried under mountains of gold.

Understand, therefore, the real amount of advantage which there is in religious privileges. Necessary, especially for the feeble, as crutches are necessary; but, like crutches, they often enfeeble the strong. For every advantage which facilitates performance and supersedes toil, a corresponding price is paid in loss. Civilization gives us telescopes and microscopes; but it takes away the unerring acuteness with which the savage reads the track of man and beast upon the ground at his feet; it gives us scientific surgery, and impairs the health which made surgery superfluous.

So, ask you where the place of religious might is? Not the place of religious privileges, — not where prayers are daily, and sacraments monthly, — not where sermons are so abundant as to pall upon the pampered taste; but on the hill-side with the Covenanter; in the wilderness with John the Baptist; in our own dependencies where the liturgy is rarely heard, and Christian friends meet at the end of months; there, amidst manifold disadvantages, when the soul is thrown upon itself, a few kindred spirits, and God, grow up those heroes of faith, like the Centurion, whose firm conviction wins admiration even from the Son of God Himself.

Lastly, See how this incident testifies to the perfect Humanity of Christ. The Saviour "marvelled;" that wonder was no fictitious semblance of admiration. It was real genuine wonder. He had not expected to find such faith. The Son of God increased in wisdom

as well as stature. He knew more at thirty than at twenty. There were things He knew at twenty which He had not known before. In the last year of His life, He went to the fig-tree expecting to find fruit, and was disappointed. In all matters of Eternal truth — principles, which are not measured by more or less true — His knowledge was absolute; but it would seem that in matters of earthly fact, which are modified by time and space, His knowledge was like ours, more or less dependent upon experience.

Now, we forget this, — we are shocked at the thought of the partial ignorance of Christ, as if it were irreverence to think it; we shrink from believing that He really felt the force of temptation, or that the Forsakenness on the Cross and the momentary doubt have parallels in our human life. In other words, we make that Divine Life a mere mimic representation of griefs that were not real, and surprises that were feigned, and sorrows that were theatrical.

But thus we lose the Saviour. For it is well to know that He was Divine; still, if we lose that truth, we should still have a God in heaven. But if there has been on this earth no real, perfect human life, no Love that never cooled, no Faith that never failed, which may shine as a loadstar across the darkness of our experience, a Light to light amidst all convictions of our own meanness and all suspicions of others' littleness, — why, we may have a Religion, but we have not a Christianity. For, if we lose Him as a Brother, we cannot feel Him as a Saviour.

XI.

[Preached July 27, 1851.]

THE RESTORATION OF THE ERRING.

Gal. vi. 1, 2. — "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

It would be a blessed thing for our Christian society if we could contemplate sin from the same point of view from which Christ and His apostles saw it. But in this matter society is ever oscillating between two extremes — undue laxity and undue severity.

In one age of the Church, — the days of Donatism, for instance, — men refuse the grace of repentance to those who have erred; holding that baptismal privileges once forfeited cannot be got back — that for a single distinct lapse there is no restoration.

In another age, the Church, having found out its error, and discovered the danger of setting up an impossible standard, begins to confer periodical absolutions and plenary indulgences, until sin, easily forgiven, is as easily committed.

And so too with societies and legislatures. In one period puritanism is dominant, and morals severe.

There are no small faults. The statute-book is defiled with the red mark of blood, set opposite innumerable misdemeanors. In an age still earlier, the destruction of a wild animal is punished like the murder of a man. Then, in another period, we have such a medley of sentiments and sickliness that we have lost all our bearings, and cannot tell what is vice and what is goodness. Charity and toleration degenerate into that feeble dreaminess which refuses to be roused by stern views of life.

This contrast, too, may exist in the same age, nay, in the same individual. One man gifted with talent, or privileged by rank, outrages all decency: the world smiles, calls it eccentricity, forgives, and is very merciful and tolerant. Then, some one, unshielded by these advantages, indorsed neither by wealth nor birth, sins, — not to one-tenth, nor one ten-thousandth part of the same extent: society is seized with a virtuous indignation — rises up in wrath — asks what is to become of the morals of the community if these things are committed; and protects its proprietors by a rigorous exclusion of the offender, cutting off the bridge behind him against his return forever.

Now, the Divine Character of the New Testament, is shown in nothing more signally than in the stable ground from which it views this matter, in comparison with the shifting and uncertain standing-point from whence the world sees it. It says, never retracting nor bating, "The wages of sin is death." It speaks sternly, with no weak sentiment, "Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto thee." But, then it accepts every excuse, admits every palliation;

looks upon this world of temptation and these frail human hearts of ours, not from the cell of a monk, or the study of a recluse, but in a large, real way; accepts the existence of sin as a fact, without affecting to be shocked or startled; assumes that it must needs be that offences come, and deals with them in a large, noble way, as the results of a disease which must be met, should be cured, and can.

I. The Christian view of other men's sins.

II. The Christian power of restoration.

I. The first thing noticeable in the apostle's view of sin is, that he looks upon it as if it might be sometimes the result of a surprise — "If a man be overtaken in a fault." In the original, anticipated, taken suddenly in front. As if circumstances had been beforehand with the man; as if sin, supposed to be left far behind, had on a sudden got in front, tripped him up, or led him into ambush.

All sins are not of this character. There are some which are in accordance with the general bent of our disposition; and the opportunity of committing them was only the first occasion for manifesting what was in the heart; so that, if they had not been committed then, they probably would or must have been at some other time, and looking back to them we have no right to lay the blame on circumstances, — we are to accept the penalty as a severe warning meant to show what was in our hearts.

There are other sins, of a different character. It seems as if it were not in us to commit them. They were, so to speak, unnatural to us. You were going quietly on your way, thinking no evil: suddenly tempt

sition, for which you were not prepared, presented itself, and, before you knew where you were you were in the dust, fallen.

As, for instance, when a question is suddenly put to a man which never ought to have been put, touching a secret of his own or another's. Had he the presence of mind or adroitness, he might turn it aside, or refuse to reply. But, being unprepared and accosted suddenly, he says hastily that which is irreconcilable with strict truth; then, to substantiate and make it look probable, misrepresents or invents something else; and so he has woven round himself a mesh which will entangle his conscience through many a weary day and many a sleepless night.

It is shocking, doubtless, to allow ourselves even to admit that this is possible; yet no one knowing human nature from men, and not from books, will deny that this might befall even a brave and true man. St. Peter was both; yet this was his history. In a crowd, suddenly, the question was put directly.—"This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth." Then a prevarication — a lie; and yet another. This was a sin of surprise. He was overtaken in a fault.

Every one of us admits the truth of this in his own case. Looking back to past life, he feels that the errors which have most terribly determined his destiny were the result of mistake. Inexperience, a hasty promise, excess of trust, incaution, nay, even a generous devotion, have been fearfully, and, as it seems to us, inadequately chastised. There may be some undue tenderness to ourselves when we thus palliate the past; still, a great part of such extenuation is only justice.

Now the Bible simply requires that we should judge others by the same rule by which we judge ourselves. The law of Christ demands that what we plead in our own case, we should admit in the case of others. Believe that in this or that case, which you judge so harshly, the heart in its deeps did not consent to sin, nor by preference love what is hateful; simply admit that such an one may have been overtaken in a fault. This is the large law of Charity.

1. Again, the apostle considers fault as that which has left a burden on the erring spirit. "Bear ye one another's burdens."

For we cannot say to the laws of God, I was overtaken. We live under stern and unrelenting laws, which permit no excuse and never hear of a surprise. They never send a man who has failed once back to try a second chance. There is no room for a mistake. You play against them for your life, and they exact the penalty inexorably: "Every man must bear his own burden." Every law has its own appropriate penalty; and the wonder of it is that often the severest penalty seems set against the smallest transgression; we suffer more for our vices than our crimes; we pay dearer for our imprudences than even for our deliberate wickedness.

Let us examine this a little more closely. One burden laid on fault is that chain of entanglement which seems to drag down to fresh sins. One step necessitates many others. One fault leads to another, and crime to crime. The soul gravitates downward beneath its burden. It was profound knowledge indeed which prophetically refused to limit Peter's

sin to once. "Verily I say unto thee . . . . thou shalt deny Me thrice."

We will try to describe that sense of burden. A fault has the power sometimes of distorting life till all seems hideous and unnatural. A man who has left his proper nature, and seems compelled to say and do things unnatural and in false show, who has thus become untrue to himself, — to him life and the whole universe becomes untrue. He can grasp nothing, he does not stand on fact, — he is living as in a dream, — himself a dream. All is ghastly, unreal, spectral. A burden is on him as of a nightmare. He moves about in nothingness and shadows as if he were not. His own existence swiftly passing might seem a phantom life, were it not for the corroding pang of anguish in his soul; for that, at least, is real!

2. Add to this, the burden of the heart weighing on itself.

It has been truly said that the human heart is like the millstone, which, if there be wheat beneath it, will grind to purposes of health; if not, will grind still, at the will of the wild wind, but on itself. So does the heart wear out itself against its own thought. One fixed idea, — one remembrance, and no other, — one stationary, wearing anguish. This is remorse, passing into despair; itself the goad to fresh and wilder crimes.

The worst of such a burden is, that it keeps down the soul from good.

Many an ethereal spirit, which might have climbed the heights of holiness, and breathed the rare and difficult air of the mountain-top, where the heavenliest spirituality alone can live, is weighed down by such

a burden to the level of the lowest. If you know such an one, mark his history, — without restoration, his career is done. That soul will not grow henceforth.

3. The burden of a secret.

Some here know the weight of an uncommunicated sin. They know how it lies like ice upon the heart. They know how dreadful a thing the sense of hypocrisy is; the knowledge of inward depravity, while all without looks pure as snow to men.

How heavy this weight may be, we gather from these indications. First, from this strange psychological fact: A man with a guilty secret will tell out the tale of his crimes as under the personality of another; a mysterious necessity seems to force him to give it utterance. As in the old fable of him who breathed out his weighty secret to the reeds: a remarkable instance of this is afforded in the case of that murderer, who, from the richness of his gifts and the enormity of his crime, is almost a historical personage, who, having become a teacher of youth, was in the habit of narrating to his pupils the anecdote of his crime, with all the circumstantial particularity of fact; but, all the while, under the guise of a pretended dream. Such men tread forever on the very verge of a confession; they seem to take a fearful pleasure in talking of the guilt,—as if the heart could not bear its own burden, but must give it *outness*.

Again, it is evidenced by the attempt to get relief in profuse and general acknowledgments of guilt. They adopt the language of religion; they call themselves vile dust and miserable sinners. The world takes generally what they mean particularly. But

they get no relief—they only deceive themselves; for they have turned the truth itself into a falsehood, using true words which they know convey a false impression, and getting praise for humility instead of punishment for guilt. They have used all the effort, and suffered all the pang, which it would have cost them to get real relief; and they have not got it, and the burden unacknowledged remains a burden still.

The third indication we have of the heaviness of this burden is the commonness of the longing for confession. None but a minister of the Gospel can estimate this; he only, who, looking round his congregation, can point to person after person whose wild tale of guilt or sorrow he is cognizant of; who can remember how often similar griefs were trembling upon lips which did not unburden themselves; whose heart, being the receptacle of the anguish of many, can judge what is in human hearts;—he alone can estimate how much there is of sin and crime lying with the weight and agony of concealment on the spirits of our brethren.

Burden 4. — An intuitive consciousness of the hidden sins of others' hearts.

To two states of soul it is given to detect the presence of evil; states the opposite of each other—innocence and guilt.

It was predicted of the Saviour while yet a child, that by Him the thoughts of many hearts should be revealed. The fulfilment of this was the history of his life. He went through the world, by His innate purity, detecting the presence of evil, as He detected the touch of her who touched His garment in the crowd.

Men, supposed spotless before, fell down before Him, crying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" This in a lower degree is true all innocence. You would think that one who can deeply read the human heart and track its windings must be himself deeply experienced in evil. But it is not so; at least, not always. Purity can detect the presence of the evil which it does not understand, just as the dove, which has never seen a hawk, trembles at its presence; and just as a horse rears uneasily when the wild beast unknown and new is near, so innocence understands, yet understands not the meaning of the unholy look, the guilty tone, the sinful manner. It shudders and shrinks from it, by a power given to it like that which God has conferred on the unreasoning mimosa. Sin gives the same power; but differently. Innocence apprehends the approach of evil, by the instinctive tact of contrast; guilt, by the instinctive consciousness of similarity. It is the profound truth contained in the history of the Fall. The eyes are opened; the knowledge of good and evil has come. The soul knows its own nakedness; but it knows also the nakedness of all other souls which have sinned after the similitude of its own sin.

Very marvellous is that test-power of guilt; it is vain to think of eluding its fine capacity of penetration. Intimations of evil are perceived and noted, when to other eyes all seems pure. The dropping of an eye, the shunning of a subject, the tremulousness of a tone, the peculiarity of a subterfuge, will tell the tale. These are tendencies like mine, and there is a spirit conscious as my own is conscious.

This dreadful burden the Scriptures call the knowl-

edge of good and evil. Can we not all remember the salient sense of happiness which we had when all was innocent — when crime was the tale of some far distant hemisphere, and the guilt we heard of was not suspected in the hearts of the beings around us? And can we not recollect, too, how by our own sin, or the cognizance of others' sin, there came a something which hung the heavens with shame and guilt, and all around seemed laden with evil? This is the worst burden that comes from transgression: loss of faith in human goodness; the being sentenced to go through life haunted with a presence from which we cannot escape; the presence of Evil in the hearts of all that we approach.

II. The Christian power of restoration: "Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one."

First, then, restoration is possible. That is a Christian fact. Moralists have taught us what sin is; they have explained how it twines itself into habit; they have shown us its ineffaceable character. It was reserved for Christianity to speak of restoration. Christ, and Christ only, has revealed that he who has erred may be restored, and made pure and clean and whole again.

Next, however, observe that this restoration is accomplished by men. Causatively, of course, and immediately, restoration is the work of Christ and of God the Spirit. Mediately and instrumentally, it is the work of men. "*Brethren*, ... restore such an one." God has given to man the power of elevating his brotherman. He has conferred on His Church the power of the keys to bind and loose. "Whoseso-

ever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." It is, therefore, in the power of man, by his conduct, to restore his brother, or to hinder his restoration. He may loose him from his sins, or retain their power upon his soul.

Now, the words of the text confine us to two modes in which this is done: by sympathy, and by forgiveness. "Bear ye one another's burdens."

1. Sympathy. We Protestants have one unvarying sneer ready for the system of the Romish confessional. They confess, we say, for the sake of absolution, that absolved they may sin again. A shallow, superficial sneer, as all sneers are. In that craving of the heart which gives the system of the Confessional its dangerous power, there is something far more profound than any sneer can fathom. It is not the desire to sin again that makes men long to unburden their consciences; but it is the yearning to be true, which lies at the bottom even of the most depraved hearts, — to appear what they are, and to lead a false life no longer; and, besides, the desire of sympathy. For this comes out of that dreadful sense of loneliness which is the result of sinning: the heart severed from God feels severed from all other hearts; goes alone, as if it had neither part nor lot with other men, itself a shadow among shadows. And its craving is for sympathy; it wants some human heart to know what it feels. Thousands upon thousands of laden hearts around us are crying, Come and bear my burden with me; and observe here, the apostle says, "Bear ye *one another's* burdens." Nor let the priest bear the burdens of all: that were most unjust. Why should the

priest's heart be the common receptacle of all the crimes and wickedness of a congregation? "Bear ye *one another's* burdens."

2. By forgivingness. There is a truth in the doctrine of absolution. God has given to man the power to absolve his brother, and so restore him to Himself. The forgiveness of man is an echo and an earnest of God's forgiveness. He whom society has restored realizes the possibility of restoration to God's favor. Even the mercifulness of one good man sounds like a voice of pardon from heaven; just as the power and the exclusion of men sound like a knell of hopelessness, and do actually bind the sin upon the soul. The man whom society will not forgive nor restore is driven into recklessness. This is the true Christian doctrine of absolution, as expounded by the Apostle Paul, 2 Cor. ii. 7–10. The degrading power of severity, the restoring power of pardon, vested in the Christian community, the voice of the minister being but the voice of them.

Now, then, let us inquire into the Christianity of our society. Restoration is the essential work of Christianity. The Gospel is the declaration of God's sympathy and God's pardon. In these two particulars, then, what is our right to be called a Christian community?

Suppose that a man is overtaken in a fault. What does he or what shall he do? Shall he retain it unacknowledged, and go through life a false man? God forbid! Shall he then acknowledge it to his brethren, that they by sympathy and merciful caution may restore him? Well, but is it not certain that it is exactly from those to whom the name of brethren most

peculiarly belongs that he will not receive assistance? Can a man in mental doubt go to the members of the same religious communion, or does he not know that they precisely are the ones who will frown upon his doubts, and proclaim his sins? Or, will a clergyman unburden his mind to his brethren in the ministry? Are they not, in their official rigor, the least capable of largely understanding him? If a woman be overtaken in a fault, will she tell it to a sister-woman? Or, does she not feel, instinctively, that her sister-woman is ever the most harsh, the most severe, and the most ferocious judge?

Well, you sneer at the confessional; you complain that mistaken ministers of the Church of England are restoring it amongst us. But who are they that are forcing on the confessional? Who drive laden and broken hearts to pour out their long pent-up sorrows into any ear that will receive them? I say it is we: we, by our uncharitableness; we, by our want of sympathy and unmerciful behavior; we, by the unchristian way in which we break down the bridge behind the penitent, and say, On, on in sin,—there is no returning.

Finally, the apostle tells the spirit in which this is to be done, and assigns a motive for the doing it. The mode is "in the spirit of meekness." For Satan cannot cast out Satan; sin cannot drive out sin. For instance, my anger cannot drive out another man's covetousness; my petulance or sneer cannot expel another's extravagance. The meekness of Christ alone has power. The charity which desires another's goodness above his well-being—that alone succeeds in the work of restoration.

The motive is, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." For sin is the result of inclination, or weakness, combined with opportunity. It is, therefore, in a degree, the offspring of circumstances. Go to the hulks, the jail, the penitentiary, the penal colony, — statistics will almost mark out for you beforehand the classes which have furnished the inmates, and the exact proportion of the delinquency of each class. You will not find the wealthy there, nor the noble, nor those guarded by the fences of social life; but the poor, and the uneducated, and the frail, and the defenceless. Can you gravely surmise that this regular tabulation depends upon the superior virtue of one class, compared with others? Or, must you admit that the majority, at least, of those who have not fallen, are safe because they were not tempted? Well, then, when St. Paul says, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," it is as if he had written: Proud Pharisee of a man, complacent in thine integrity, who thankest God that thou art not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, &c., hast thou gone through the terrible ordeal, and come off with unscathed virtue? Or, art thou in all these points simply untried? Proud Pharisee of a woman, who passest by an erring sister with a haughty look of conscious superiority, dost thou know what temptation is, with strong feeling and mastering opportunity? Shall the rich-cut crystal which stands on the table of the wealthy man, protected from dust and injury, boast that it has escaped the flaws, and the cracks, and the fractures, which the earthen jar has sustained, exposed and subjected to rough and general uses? O man or woman! thou who wouldst be a Pharisee, consider, O, "consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

XII.

[Preached Christmas Day, 1851.]

CHRIST THE SON.

Heb. i. 1. — "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

Two critical remarks.

1. "Sundry times," — more literally, sundry portions, sections — not of time, but of the matter of the revelation. God gave His revelation in parts, piecemeal, as you teach a child to spell a word, — letter by letter, syllable by syllable, — adding all at last together. God had a Word to spell — His own Name. By degrees He did it. At last it came entire. The Word was made Flesh.

2. "His Son," — more correctly, "a Son" — for this is the very argument. Not that God now spoke by Christ, but that, whereas once by prophets, now by a Son. The filial dispensation was the last.

This epistle was addressed to Christians on the verge of apostasy. See those passages: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;

seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." — "Cast not away your confidence." — "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

Observe what the danger was. Christianity had disappointed them, — they had not found in it the rest they anticipated. They looked back to the Judaism they had left, and saw a splendid temple-service, a line of priests, a visible temple witnessing of God's presence, a religion which was unquestionably fertile in prophets and martyrs. They saw these pretensions, and wavered.

But this was all on the eve of dissolution. The Jewish earth and heavens — that is, the Jewish Commonwealth and Church — were doomed, and about to pass away. The writer of this epistle felt that their hour was come, — see chap. xii. 26, 27, — and if their religion rested on nothing better than this, he knew that in the crash religion itself would go. To return to Judaism was to go down to atheism and despair.

Reason alleged — they had contented themselves with a superficial view of Christianity; they had not seen how it was interwoven with all their own history, and how it alone explained that history.

Therefore in this epistle the writer labors to show that Christianity was the fulfilment of the *Idea* latent in Judaism; that from the earliest times and in every institution, it was implied. In the monarchy, in prophets, in sabbath-days, in psalms, in the priesthood, and in temple-services, Christianity lay concealed; and the dispensation of a Son was the realization of what else was shadows. He, therefore, alone,

who adhered to Christ, was the true Jew, and to apostatize from Christianity was really to apostatize from true Judaism.

I am to show, then, that the manifestation of God through a Son was implied, not realized, in the earlier dispensation.

"Sundry portions" of this Truth are instanced in the epistle. The mediatorial dispensation of Moses — the gift of Canaan — the Sabbath, &c. At present I select these:

I. The preparatory Dispensation.

II. The filial and final Dispensation.

I. Implied, not fulfilled, in the kingly office. Three Psalms are quoted, all referring to kingship. In Psalm 2d, it was plain that the true idea of a king was only fulfilled in one who was a Son of God. The Jewish king was king only so far as he held from God; as His image, the representative of the Fountain of Law and Majesty.

"To Him God hath said, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee."

The 45th Psalm is a bridal hymn, composed on the marriage of a Jewish king. Startling language is addressed to him. He is called God, Lord. — "Thy throne, *O God*, is for ever and ever." The bride is invited to worship him as it were a God: — "He is thy Lord, and worship thou him." No one is surprised at this who remembers that Moses was said to be made a God to Aaron. Yet it is startling, almost blasphemous, unless there be a deeper meaning implied — the divine character of the real king.

In the 110th Psalm a new idea is added. The true

king must be a priest. — "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." This was addressed to the Jewish king; but it implied that the ideal king, of which he was for the time the representative, more or less truly, is one who at the same time sustains the highest religious character and the highest executive authority.

Again, David was emphatically the type of the Jewish regal idea. David is scarcely a personage, so entirely does he pass in Jewish forms of thought into an ideal Sovereign, — "the sure mercies of David." David is the name therefore for the David which was to be. Now, David was a wanderer, kingly still, ruling men and gaining adherents by force of inward royalty. Thus in the Jewish mind the kingly office disengaged itself from outward pomp and hereditary right, as mere accidents, and became a personal reality. The king was an idea.

Further still. The epistle extends this idea to man. The psalm had ascribed (Ps. viii. 6) kingly qualities and rule to manhood — rule over the creation. Thus the idea of a king belonged properly to humanity; to the Jewish king, as the representative of humanity.

Yet even in collective humanity the royal character is not realized. — "We see not," says the epistle, "all things as yet put under him" — man.

Collect, then, these notions. The true king of men is a Son of God; one who is to his fellow-men God and Lord, as the Jewish bride was to feel her royal husband to be to her; one who is a priest; one who may be poor and exiled, yet not less royal.

Say, then, whence is this idea fulfilled by Judaism? To which of the Jewish kings can it be applied, except

with infinite exaggeration? To David? Why, the Redeemer shows the insuperable difficulty of this. — "How, then, doth David in spirit call him," — that is, the king of whom he was writing, — "Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my *Lord*, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool?"

David, writing of himself, yet speaks there in the third person, projecting himself outward as an object of contemplation, an idea.

Is it fulfilled in the human race? — "We see not yet all things put under him." Then the writer goes on: — "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." In Jesus of Nazareth alone all these fragments, these sundry portions of the revealed Idea of Royalty, met.

II. Christianity was implied in the race of prophets.

The second class of quotations refer to the prophets' life and history. (Heb. ii. 11–14.) Psalm xxii. 22; Psalm xviii. 2; Isaiah xii. 2; Isaiah viii. 18.

Remember what the prophets were. They were not merely predictors of the future. Nothing destroys the true conception of the prophets' office more than those popular books in which their mission is certified by curious coïncidences. For example, if it is predicted that Babylon shall be a desolation, the haunt of wild beasts, &c., then some traveller has seen a lion standing on Birs Nimroud; or, if the fisherman is to dry his nets on Tyre, simply expressing its destruction thereby, the commentator is not easy till he finds that a net has been actually seen drying on a rock. But

this is to degrade the prophetic office to a level with Egyptian palmistry; to make the prophet like an astrologer, or a gypsy fortune-teller, — one who can predict destinies and draw horoscopes. But, in truth, the first office of the prophet was with the present. He read Eternal Principles beneath the present and the transitory; and in doing this, of course, he prophesied the future — for a principle true to-day is true forever. But this was, so to speak, an accident of his office — not its essential feature. If, for instance, he read in the voluptuousness of Babylon the secret of Babylon's decay, he also read by anticipation the doom of Corinth, London, all cities in Babylon's state; or, if Jerusalem's fall was predicted, in it all such judgment-comings were foreseen; and the language is true of the fall of the world, as truly, or more so, than that of Jerusalem. A philosopher saying in the present tense the law by which comets move, predicts all possible cometary movements.

Now, the prophet's life almost more than his words was predictive. The writer of the epistle lays down a great principle respecting the prophet (ii. 11): — "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." It was the very condition of his inspiration that he should be one with the people. So far from making him superhuman, it made him *more* man. He felt with more exquisite sensitiveness all that belongs to man, else he could not have been a prophet. His insight into things was the result of that very weakness, sensitiveness, and susceptibility, so tremblingly alive. He burned with their thoughts, and expressed them. He was obliged by the very sensitiveness of his humanity to have a more entire

dependence and a more perfect sympathy than other men. The sanctifying prophet was one with those whom he sanctified. Hence he uses those expressions quoted from Isaiah and the Psalms above.

He was more man, just because more divine, — more a son of man, because more a Son of God. He was peculiarly the suffering Israelite; his countenance marred more than the sons of men. Hence, we are told the prophets searched "what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (1 Peter i. 11.)

Observe, it was a spirit *in* them, their own lives witnessing mysteriously of what the Perfect Humanity must be suffering.

Thus, especially, Isaiah liii., spoken originally of the Jewish nation; of the prophet as peculiarly the Israelite; no wonder the eunuch asked Philip, in perplexity, "Of whom doth the prophet say this? — of himself, or some other man?" The truth is, he said it of himself, but prophetically of humanity; true of him, most true of the Highest Humanity.

Here, then, was a new "portion" of the revelation. The prophet rebuked the king, often opposed the priest, but was one with the people. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one."

If, then, One had come claiming to be the Prophet of the Race, and was a Sufferer, claiming to be the Son of God, and yet peculiarly man; the son of man; the son of man just because the Son of God; more Divine because more human; — then this was only what the whole race of Jewish prophets should have prepared

them for. God had spoken by the prophets. That God had now spoken by a Son in whom the idea of the True prophet was realized in its entireness.

III. The Priesthood continued this idea latent. The writer saw three elements in the priestly idea. 1. That he should be ordained for men in things pertaining to God. 2. That he should offer gifts and sacrifices. 3. That he should be called by God, not be a mere self-assertor.

1. Ordained for men. Remark here the true idea contained in Judaism, and its difference from the Heathen notions. In Heathenism the priest was of a different Race; separate from his fellows. In Judaism he was ordained for men; their representative; constituted in their behalf. The Jewish priest represented the holiness of the nation; he went into the holy of holies, showing it. But this great idea was only implied, not fulfilled, in the Jewish priest. He was only by a fiction the representative of holiness. Holy he was not. He only entered into a fictitious holy of holies. If the idea were to be ever real, it must be in One who should be actually what the Jewish priest was by a figment, and who should carry out humanity into the real Holy of Holies, — the presence of God; thus becoming our invisible and Eternal Priest.

Next, it was implied that his call must be Divine. But (in the 110th Psalm) a higher call is intimated than that Divine call which was made to the Aaronic priesthood by a regular succession, or, as it is called in the epistle, "the law of a carnal commandment." Melchizedeck's call is spoken of. The king is called a priest after his order. Not a derived or hereditary

priesthood; not one transmissible, beginning and ending in himself,—Heb. vii. 1 to 3. A priesthood; in other words, of character, of inward right; a call internal, hence more Divine; or, as the writer calls it, a priest "after the power of an endless life." This was the Idea for which the Jewish psalms themselves ought to have prepared the Jew.

2. Again, the priests offered gifts and sacrifices. Distinguish. Gifts were thank-offerings; first-fruits of harvest, vintage, &c., a man's best; testimonials of infinite gratefulness, and expressions of it. But sacrifices were different: they implied a sense of unworthiness; that sense which conflicts with the idea of any right to offer gifts.

Now, the Jewish Scriptures themselves had explained this subject, and this instinctive feeling of unworthiness for which sacrifice found an expression. Prophets and Psalmists had felt that no sacrifice was perfect which did not reach the conscience (Ps. li. 16, 17), for instance; also, Heb. x. 8 to 12. No language could more clearly show that the spiritual Jew discerned that entire surrender to the Divine Will is the only perfect Sacrifice, the ground of all sacrifices, and that which alone imparts to it a significance. Not sacrifice .... "Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." *That* is the sacrifice which God wills.

I say it firmly — all other notions of sacrifice are false. Whatsoever introduces the conception of vindictiveness or retaliation; whatever speaks of appeasing fury; whatever estimates the value of the Saviour's sacrifice by the "penalty paid;" whatever differs from these notions of sacrifice contained in psalms and

prophets, — is borrowed from the bloody shambles of Heathenism, and not from Jewish altars.

3. This alone makes the worshipper perfect as pertaining to the conscience. He who can offer it in its entireness, He alone is the world's Atonement; He in whose heart the Law was, and who alone of all mankind was content to do it, His Sacrifice alone can be the Sacrifice all-sufficient in the Father's sight as the proper Sacrifice of humanity; He who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, He alone can give the Spirit which enables us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.

He is the only High Priest of the Universe.

XIII.

[Preached April 25, 1852.]

WORLDLINESS.

1 John ii. 15–17. — "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Religion differs from morality in the value which it places on the affections. Morality requires that an act be done on principle. Religion goes deeper, and inquires the state of the heart. The Church of Ephesus was unsuspected in her orthodoxy, and unblemished in her zeal; but to the ear of him who saw the apocalyptic vision, a voice spake, "I have somewhat against thee, in that thou hast left thy first love."

In the eye of Christianity he is a Christian who loves the Father. He who loves the world may be in his way a good man, respecting whose eternal destiny we pronounce no opinion; but one of the Children of the Kingdom he is not.

Now, the boundary-lines of the love of this world, or worldliness, are exceedingly difficult to define. Bigotry pronounces many things wrong which are harmless; laxity permits many which are by no means

innocent; and it is a question perpetually put, a question miserably perplexing to those whose religion consists more in avoiding that which is wrong than in seeking that which is right, — what is Worldliness?

To that question we desire to find to-day an answer in the text; premising this, that our object is to put ourselves in possession of principles. For otherwise we shall only deal with this matter as empirics; condemning this and approving that by opinion, but on no certain and intelligible ground; we shall but float on the unstable sea of opinion.

We confine ourselves to two points.

I. The nature of the forbidden world.

II. The reasons for which it is forbidden.

I. The nature of the forbidden world.

The first idea suggested by "the world" is this green earth, with its days and nights, its seasons, its hills and its valleys, its clouds and brightness. This is not the world the love of which is prohibited; for, to forbid the love of this would be to forbid the love of God.

There are three ways in which we learn to know Him. First, by the working of our minds. Love, Justice, Tenderness — if we would know what they mean in God, we must gain the conception from their existence in ourselves. But, inasmuch as humanity is imperfect in us, if we were to learn of God only from His image in ourselves, we should run the risk of calling the evil good, and the imperfect divine. Therefore, He has given us, besides this, the representation of Himself in Christ, where is found the meeting-point

of the Divine and the human, and in whose Life the character of Deity is reflected as completely as the sun is seen in the depth of the still, untroubled lake.

But there is a third way, still, in which we attain the idea of God. This world is but manifested Deity, — God shown to the eye, and ear, and sense. This strange phenomenon of a world, — what is it? All we know of it — all we know of matter — is, that it is an assemblage of Powers which produce in us certain sensations; but what those Powers are in themselves we know not. The sensation of color, form, weight, we have; but what it is which gives those sensations, — in the language of the schools, what is the Substratum which supports the accidents or qualities of Being, — we cannot tell. Speculative Philosophy replies, It is but our own selves becoming conscious of themselves. We, in our own being, are the cause of all phenomena. Positive Philosophy replies, What the Being of the world is we cannot tell; we only know what it seems to us. Phenomena — appearance — beyond this we cannot reach. Being itself is, and forever must be, unknowable. Religion replies, That something is God. The world is but manifested Deity. That which lies beneath the surface of all Appearance, the cause of all Manifestation, is God. So that to forbid the love of all this world, is to forbid the love of that by which God is known to us. The sounds and sights of this lovely world are but the drapery of the robe in which the Invisible has clothed Himself. Does a man ask what this world is, and why man is placed in it? It was that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world might be clearly seen. Have we ever stood beneath the solemn vault of heaven, when

the stars were looking down in their silent splendor, and not felt an overpowering sense of His eternity? When the white lightning has quivered in the sky, has that told us nothing of Power, or only something of electricity? Rocks and mountains, are they here to give us the idea of material massiveness, or to reveal the conception of the Strength of Israel? When we take up the page of past history, and read that wrong never prospered long, but that nations have drunk, one after another, the cup of terrible retribution, can we dismiss all that as the philosophy of history, or shall we say, that through blood, and war, and desolation, we trace the footsteps of a presiding God, and find evidence that there sits at the helm of this world's affairs a strict, and rigorous, and most terrible justice? To the eye that can see, to the heart that is not paralyzed, God is here. The warnings which the Bible utters against the things of this world bring no charge against the glorious world itself. The world is the glass through which we see the Maker. But what men do is this: they put the dull quicksilver of their own selfishness behind the glass, and so it becomes not the transparent medium through which God shines, but the dead opaque which reflects back themselves. Instead of lying with open eye and heart to *receive*, we project ourselves upon the world and *give*. So it gives us back our own false feelings and nature. Therefore it brings forth thorns and thistles. Therefore it grows weeds, — weeds to us. Therefore the lightning burns with wrath, and the thunder mutters vengeance. By all which it comes to pass that the very Manifestation of God has transformed itself, — the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the

pride of life; and all that is in the world is no longer of the Father, but is of the world.

By the world, again, is sometimes meant the men that are in the world. And thus the command would run, — Love not men, but love God. It has been so read. The Pharisees read it so, of old. The property which natural affection demanded for the support of parents, upon that they wrote "Corban," — a gift for God, — and robbed men that they might give to God. Yet no less than this is done whenever human affection is called idolatry. As if God were jealous of our love, in the human sense of jealousy. As if we could love God the more by loving man the less. As if it were not by loving our brother, whom we have seen, that we approximate towards the love of God, whom we have not seen. This is but the cloak for narrowness of heart. Men of withered affections excuse their lovelessness by talking largely of the affection due to God. Yet, like the Pharisees, the love on which Corban is written is never given to God, but really retained for self.

No, let a man love his neighbor as himself. Let him love his brother, sister, wife, with all the intensity of his heart's affection. This is not St. John's forbidden world.

Again. By the world is often understood the worldly occupation, trade, or profession, which a man exercises. And, accordingly, it is no uncommon thing to hear this spoken of as something which, if not actually anti-religious, is, so far as it goes, time taken away from the religious life. But when the man from whom the legion had been expelled asked Jesus for the precepts of a religious existence, the reply sent him back to

home. His former worldliness had consisted in doing his worldly duties ill, — his future religiousness was to consist in doing those same duties better. A man's profession or trade is not only not incompatible with religion (provided it be a lawful one) — it is his religion. And this is true even of those callings which, at first sight, appear to have in them something hard to reconcile with religiousness. For instance, the profession of a lawyer. He is a worldling in it if he use it for some personal greed, or degrade it by chicanery. But, in itself, it is an occupation which sifts right from wrong; which, in the entangled web of human life, unwinds the meshes of error. He is by profession enlisted on the side of the Right, — directly connected with God, the central point of Justice and Truth. A nobler occupation need no man desire than to be a fellow-worker with God. Or, take the soldier's trade, — in this world generally a trade of blood, and revenge, and idle licentiousness. Rightly understood, what is it? A soldier's whole life, whether he will or not, is an enunciation of the greatest of religious truths, — the voluntary sacrifice of one for the sake of many. In the detail of his existence, how abundant are the opportunities for the voluntary recognition of this, — opportunities such as that when the three strong men brake through the lines of the enemy to obtain the water for their sovereign's thirst; opportunities as when that same heroic sovereign poured the untasted water on the ground, and refused to drink because it was his soldiers' lives — he could not drink at such a price. Earnestness in a lawful calling is not worldliness. A profession is the sphere of our activity. There is something sacred in work. To work in the

appointed sphere is to be religious, — as religious as to pray. This is not the forbidden world.

Now, to define what worldliness is. Remark, first that it is determined by the *spirit* of a life, not the objects with which the life is conversant. It is not the "flesh," nor the "eye," nor "life," which are forbidden, but it is the *lust* of the flesh, and the *lust* of the eye, and the *pride* of life. It is not this earth, nor the men who inhabit it, nor the sphere of our legitimate activity, that we may not love; but the way in which the love is given which constitutes worldliness. Look into this a little closer — the lust of the flesh. Here is affection for the outward: Pleasure, that which affects the senses only; the flesh, that enjoyment which comes from the emotions of an hour, be it coarse or be it refined, the pleasure of wine or the pleasure of music, so far as it is only a movement of the flesh. Again, the lust of the eye. Here is affection for the transient; for the eye can only gaze on form and color, and these are things that do not last.

Once more: the pride of life. Here is affection for the unreal. Men's opinion, — the estimate which depends upon wealth, rank, circumstances. Worldliness, then, consists in these three things: Attachment to the Outward, attachment to the Transitory, attachment to the Unreal; in opposition to love for the Inward, the Eternal, the True; and the one of these affections is necessarily expelled by the other. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." But let a man once feel the power of the kingdom that is within, and then the love fades of that emotion whose life consists only in the thrill of a nerve, or the vivid sensation of a feeling; he loses his happiness, and wins

his blessedness. Let a man get but one glimpse of the King in his beauty, and then the forms and shapes of things here are but the types of an invisible loveliness — types which he is content should break and fade. Let but a man feel truth, — that goodness is greatness — that there is no other greatness, — and then the degrading reverence with which the titled of this world bow before wealth, and the ostentation with which the rich of this world profess their familiarity with title — all the pride of life, what is it to him? The love of the Inward, — Everlasting, Real, — the love, that is, of the Father, — annihilates the love of the world.

II. We pass to the reasons for which the love of the world is forbidden.

The first reason assigned is, that the love of the world is incompatible with the love of God. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Now, what we observe in this is, that St. John takes it for granted that we must love something. If not the love of the Father, then of necessity the love of the world. Love misplaced, or love rightly placed, — you have your choice between these two; you have not your choice between loving God or nothing. No man is sufficient for himself. Every man must go out of himself for enjoyment. Something in this universe besides himself there must be to bind the affections of every man. There is that within us which compels us to attach ourselves to something outward. The choice is not this, — Love, or be without love. You cannot give the pent-up steam its choice of moving or not moving. It must move one way or the other; the right way or the

wrong way. Direct it rightly, and its energy rolls the engine-wheels smoothly on their track; block up its passage, and it bounds away, a thing of madness and ruin. Stop it, you cannot; it will rather burst. So it is with our hearts. There is a pent-up energy of love, gigantic for good or evil. Its right way is in the direction of our Eternal Father; and then, let it boil and pant as it will, the course of the man is smooth. Expel the love of God from the bosom,—what then? Will the passion that is within cease to burn? Nay. Tie the man down,—let there be no outlet for his affections,—let him attach himself to nothing, and become a loveless spirit in this universe,—and then there is what we call a broken heart; the steam bursts the machinery that contains it. Or else, let him take his course, unfettered and free, and then we have the riot of worldliness,—a man with strong affections thrown off the line, tearing himself to pieces, and carrying desolation along with him. Let us comprehend our own nature, ourselves, and our destinies. God is our Rest, the only One that can quench the fever of our desire. God in Christ is what we want. When men quit that, so that "the love of the Father is not in them," then they must perforce turn aside; the nobler heart to break with disappointment,—the meaner heart to love the world instead, and sate and satisfy itself as best it may on things that perish in the using. Herein lies the secret of our being, in this world of the affections. This explains why our noblest feelings lie so close to our basest,—why the noblest so easily metamorphose themselves into the basest. The

heart which was made large enough for God wastes itself upon the world.

The second reason which the apostle gives for not squandering affection on the world is its transitoriness. Now, this transitoriness exists in two shapes. It is transitory in itself, — the world passeth away. It is transitory in its power of exciting desire, — the lust thereof passeth away.

It is a twice-told tale, that the world is passing away from us, and there is very little new to be said on the subject. God has written it on every page of His creation, that there is nothing here which lasts. Our affections change. The friendships of the man are not the friendships of the boy. Our very selves are altering. The basis of our being may remain, but our views, tastes, feelings, are no more our former self than the oak is the acorn. The very face of the visible world is altering around us; we have the gray mouldering ruins to tell of what was once. Our laborers strike their ploughshares against the foundations of buildings which once echoed to human mirth, — skeletons of men, to whom life once was dear, — urns and coins that remind the antiquarian of a magnificent empire. To-day the shot of the enemy defaces and blackens monuments and venerable temples, which remind the Christian that into the deep silence of eternity the Roman world, which was in its vigor in the days of John, has passed away. And so things are going. It is a work of weaving and unweaving. All passes. Names that the world heard once in thunder are scarcely heard at the end of centuries; — good or bad, they pass. A few years ago, and we were not. A few

centuries further, and we reach the age of beings of almost another race. Nimrod was the conqueror and scourge of his far-back age. Tubal Cain gave to the world the iron which was the foundation of every triumph of men over nature. We have their names now. But the philologist is uncertain whether the name of the first is real or mythical; and the traveller excavates the sand-mounds of Nineveh to wonder over the records which he cannot decipher. Tyrant and benefactor, both are gone. And so all things are moving on to the last fire, which, shall wrap the world in conflagration, and make all that has been the recollection of a dream. This is the history of the world, and all that is in it. It passes while we look at it. Like as when you watch the melting tints of the evening sky, — purple-crimson, gorgeous gold, a few pulsations of quivering light, and it is all gone, — we are such stuff as dreams are made of.

The other aspect of this transitoriness is, that the lust of the world passeth away. By which the apostle seems to remind us of that solemn truth that, fast as the world is fleeting from us, faster still does the taste for its enjoyments fleet; fast as the brilliancy fades from earthly things, faster still does the eye become wearied of straining itself upon them.

Now, there is one way in which this takes place, by a man becoming satiated with the world. There is something in earthly rapture which cloys. And when we drink deep of pleasure, there is left behind something of that loathing which follows a repast on sweets. When a boy sets out in life, it is all fresh, — freshness in feeling, zest in his enjoyment, purity in

his heart. Cherish that, my young brethren, while you can; — lose it, and it never comes again. It is not an easy thing to cherish it, for it demands restraint in pleasure, and no young heart loves that. Religion has only calm, sober, perhaps monotonous pleasures, to offer at first. The deep rapture of enjoyment comes in after-life. And that will not satisfy the young heart. Men will know what pleasure is, and they drink deep. Keen delight, feverish enjoyment — that is what you long for; and these emotions lose their delicacy and their relish, and will only come at the bidding of gross excitements. The ecstasy which once rose to the sight of the rainbow in the sky, or the bright brook, or the fresh morning, comes languidly at last only in the crowded midnight room, or the excitement of commercial speculation, or beside the gambling-table, or amidst the fever of politics. It is a spectacle for men and angels, when a man has become old in feeling, and worn-out before his time. Know we none such among our own acquaintance? Have the young never seen those aged ones who stand amongst them in their pleasures, almost as if to warn them of what they themselves must come to, at last? Have they never marked the dull and sated look that they cast upon the whole scene, as upon a thing which they would fain enjoy and cannot? Know you what you have been looking on? A sated worldling, — one to whom pleasure was rapture once, as it is to you now. Thirty years more, that look and that place will be yours; and that is the way the world rewards its veterans: it chains them to it after the "lust of the world" has passed away.

Or, this may be done by a discovery of the unsatis-

factoriness of the world. That is a discovery not made by every man. But there are some, at least, who have learned it bitterly, and that without the aid of Christ. Some there are who would not live over this past life again, even if were possible. Some there are who would gladly have done with the whole thing at once, and exchange — O, how joyfully! — the garment for the shroud. And some there are who cling to life, not because life is dear, but because the future is dark, and they tremble somewhat at the thought of entering it. Clinging to life is no proof that a man is still longing for the world. We often cling to life the more tenaciously as years go on. The deeper the tree has struck its roots into the ground, the less willing is it to be rooted up. But there is many a one who so hangs on just because he has not the desperate hardihood to quit it, nor faith enough to be "willing to depart." The world and he have understood each other. He has seen through it. He has ceased to hope anything from it. The love of the Father is not in him; but "the lust of the world" has passed away.

Lastly. A reason for unlearning the love of the world is the solitary permanence of Christian action In contrast with the fleetingness of this world, the apostle tells us of the stability of labor. "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." And let us mark this. Christian life is action; not a speculating, not a debating, but a doing. One thing, and only one, in the world, has eternity stamped upon it. Feelings pass; resolves and thoughts pass; opinions change. What you have done lasts — lasts in you. Through ages, through eternity, what you have done for Christ, that, and only that, you are. "They rest from their

nbors," saith the Spirit, "and their works do follow them." If the love of the Father be in us, where is the thing done which we have to show? You think justly, feel rightly — yes, but your work. Produce it. Men of wealth, men of talent, men of leisure, What are you *doing* in God's world for God?

Observe, however, to distinguish between the act and the actor: it is not the thing done, but the Doer, who lasts. The thing done often is a failure. The cup given in the name of Christ may be given to one unworthy of it; but think ye that the love with which it was given has passed away? Has it not printed itself indelibly in the character, by the very act of giving? Bless, and if the Son of peace be there, your act succeeds; but if not, your blessing shall return unto you again. In other words, the act may fail, but the doer of it abideth forever.

We close this subject with two practical truths.

First of all, let us learn from earthly changefulness a lesson of cheerful activity. The world has its way of looking at all this, — but it is not the Christian's way. There has been nothing said to-day that a worldly moralist has not already said a thousand times far better. The fact is a world-fact. The application is a Christian one. Every man can be eloquent about the nothingness of time.

But the application! Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die? That is one application. Let us sentimentalize and be sad in this fleeting world, and talk of the instability of human greatness, and the transitoriness of human affection? Those are the only two applications the world knows. They shut out the recollection, and are merry: or, they dwell on it, and are

sad. Christian brethren, dwell on it, and be happy. This world is not yours: thank God it is not. It is dropping away from you like worn-out autumn leaves; but beneath it, hidden in it, there is another world lying as the flower lies in the bud. That is *your* world, which must burst forth at last into eternal luxuriance. All you stand on, see, and love, is but the husk of something better. Things are passing; our friends are dropping off from us; strength is giving way; our relish for earth is going; and the world no longer wears to our hearts the radiance that once it wore. We have the same sky above us, and the same scenes around us; but the freshness that our hearts extracted from everything in boyhood, and the glory that seemed to rest once on earth and life, have faded away forever. Sad and gloomy truths to the man who is going down to the grave with his work undone. Not sad to the Christian; but rousing, exciting, invigorating. If it be the eleventh hour, we have no time for folding of the hands; we will work the faster. Through the changefulness of life; through the solemn tolling of the bell of Time, which tells us that another, and another, and another, are gone before us; through the noiseless rush of a world which is going down with gigantic footsteps into nothingness. Let not the Christian slack his hand from work; for he that doeth the will of God may defy hell itself to quench his immortality.

Finally, The love of this world is only unlearned by the love of the Father. It were a desolate thing, indeed, to forbid the love of earth, if there were nothing to fill the vacant space in the heart. But it is just for this purpose, that a sublimer affection may find room, that the lower is to be expelled. And there is

only one way in which that higher love is lea[illegible]] cross of Christ is the measure of the love of God u us, and the measure of the meaning of man's exist- ence. The measure of the love of God. — Through th death-knell of a passing universe, God seems at lea to speak to us in wrath. There is no doubt of wh God means in the cross. He means love. The mea ure of the meaning of man's existence. — Measure a by the cross. Do you want success? The cross is fai ure. Do you want a name? The cross is infamy. Is i to be gay and happy that you live? The cross is pain and sharpness. Do you live that the will of God may be done, in you and by you, in life and death? Then, and only then, the spirit of the cross is in you. When once a man has learned that, the power of the world is gone; and no man need bid him, in denunciation or in invitation, not to love the world. He cannot love the world: for he has got an ambition above the world. He has planted his foot upon a Rock, and when all else is gone, he at least abides forever.

XIV.

[Preached November 14, 1852.]

THE SYDENHAM PALACE, AND THE RELIGIOUS NOF OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

Rom. xiv. 5, 6 — "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks."

The selection of this text is suggested by one of the current topics of the day. Lately, projects have been devised, one of which in importance surpasses all the rest, for providing places of public recreation for the people; and it has been announced, with the sanction of government, that such a place will be held open during a part, at least, of the day of rest. By a large section of sincerely religious persons this announcement has been received with considerable alarm and strenuous opposition. It has seemed to them that such a desecration would be a national crime; for, holding the Sabbaths to be God's signs between Himself and His people, they cannot but view the desecration of the sign as a forfeiture of His covenant, and an act which will assuredly call down

national judgments. By the secular press, on the contrary, this proposal has been defended with considerable power. It has been maintained that the Sabbath is a Jewish institution — in its strictness, at all events, not binding on a Christian community. It has been urged with much force that we cannot consistently refuse to concede to the poor man publicly, that right of recreation which privately the rich man has long taken without rebuke, and with no protest on the part of the ministers of Christ. And it has been said that such places of recreation will tend to humanize — which, if not identical with Christianizing the population, is at least a step towards it.

Upon such a subject, where truth unquestionably does not lie upon the surface, it cannot be out of place if a minister of Christ endeavors to direct the minds of his congregation towards the formation of an opinion; not dogmatically, but humbly remembering always that his own temptation is, from his very position, as a clergyman, to view such matters not so much in the broad light of the possibilities of actual life, as with the eyes of a recluse — from a clerical and ecclesiastical, rather than from a large and human point of view. For no minister of Christ has a right to speak oracularly. All that he can pretend to do is to give his judgment, as one that has obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. And, on large national subjects, there is perhaps no class so ill qualified to form a judgment with breadth, as we, the clergy of the Church of England, accustomed as we are to move in the narrow circle of those who listen to us with forbearance and deference, and mixing but little in real life, till, in our cloistered and inviolable sanctu-

aries, we are apt to forget that it is one thing to lay down rules for a religious clique, and another to legislate for a great nation.

In the Church of Rome, a controversy had arisen, in the time of St. Paul, respecting the exact relation in which Christianity stood to Judaism; and consequently the obligation of various Jewish institutions came to be discussed: among the rest, the Sabbath-day. One party maintained its abrogation; another, its continued obligation. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike." Now, it is remarkable that, in his reply, the Apostle Paul, although his own views upon the question were decided and strong, passes no judgment of censure upon the practice of either of these parties, but only blames the uncharitable spirit in which the one "judged their brethren," as irreligious, and the other "set at naught" their stricter brethren, as superstitious. He lays down, however, two principles for the decision of the matter: the first being the rights of Christian conviction, or the sacredness of the individual conscience — "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" the second, a principle unsatisfactory enough, and surprising, no doubt, to both — that there is such a thing as a religious observance, and also such a thing as a religious non-observance of the day — "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it."

I shall consider,

I. St. Paul's own view upon the question.

II. His modifications of that view, in reference to separate cases.

I. St. Paul's own view.

No one, I believe, who would read St. Paul's own writings, with unprejudiced mind, could fail to come to the conclusion that he considered the Sabbath abrogated by Christianity. Not merely modified in its stringency, but totally repealed.

For example, see Col. ii. 16, 17. observe, he counts the Sabbath-day among those institutions of Judaism which were shadows, and of which Christ was the realization — the substance, or "body;" and he bids the Colossians remain indifferent to the judgment which would be pronounced upon their non-observance of such days. "Let no man judge you with respect to . . . . the Sabbath days."

More decisively still, in the text. For it has been contended that in the former passage "Sabbath-days" refers simply to the Jewish Sabbaths, which were superseded by the Lord's day; and that the apostle does not allude at all to the new institution, which it is supposed had superseded it. Here, however, there can be no such ambiguity. "One man esteemeth *every* day alike;" and he only says, Let him be fully persuaded in his own mind. "Every" day must include first days as well as last days of the week — Sundays as well as Saturdays.

And again, he even speaks of scrupulous adherence to particular days, as if it were giving up the very principle of Christianity: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." So that his objection was not to Jewish days, but to the very principle of attaching intrinsic sacredness to any days. All forms and modes of particularizing the Christian

life he reckoned as bondage under the elements or alphabet of the law. And this is plain from the nature of the case. He struck not at a day, but at a principle. Else, if, with all this vehemence and earnestness, he only meant to establish a new set of days in the place of the old, there is no intelligible principle for which he is contending, and that earnest apostle is only a champion for one day instead of another,—an assertor of the eternal sanctities of Sunday, instead of the eternal sanctities of Saturday. Incredible, indeed.

Let us, then, understand the principle on which he declared the repeal of the Sabbath. He taught that the blood of Christ cleansed all things; therefore there was nothing *specially* clean. Christ had vindicated all for God; therefore there was no thing more God's than another. For, to assert one thing as God's more than another, is, by implication, to admit that other to be less God's.

The blood of Christ had vindicated God's parental right to all humanity; therefore there could be no peculiar people. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free; but Christ is all and in all." It had proclaimed God's property in all places; therefore there could be no one place intrinsically holier than another. No human dedication, no human consecration, could localize God in space. Hence, the first martyr quoted from the prophet: "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool; what house will ye build for me? saith the Lord."

Lastly, the Gospel of Christ had sanctified all time; hence no time could be specially God's. For, to assert that Sunday is more God's day than Monday, is to maintain by implication Monday is His less rightfully.

Here, however, let it be observed, it is perfectly possible, and not at all inconsistent with this, that for human convenience, and even human necessities, just as it became desirable to set apart certain places in which the noise of earthly business could not be heard for spiritual worship, so it should become desirable to set apart certain days for special worship. But, then, all such were defensible on the ground of wise and Christian expediency alone; they could not be placed on the ground of a Divine statute or command; they rested on the authority of the Church of Christ; and the power which had made could unmake them again.

Accordingly, in early, we cannot say exactly how early times, the Church of Christ felt the necessity of substituting something in place of the ordinances which had been repealed. And the Lord's day arose, not a day of compulsory rest — not such a day at all as modern sabbatarians suppose. Not a Jewish sabbath; rather a day in many respects absolutely contrasted with the Jewish sabbath.

For the Lord's day sprung, not out of a transference of the Jewish sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, but rather out of the idea of making the week an imitation of the life of Christ. With the early Christians, the great conception was that of following their crucified and risen Lord; they set, as it were, the clock of time to the epochs of His history. Friday represented the Death, in which all Christians daily die; and Sunday the Resurrection, in which all Christians daily rise to

higher life. What Friday and Sunday were to the week, that Good Friday and Easter Sunday were to the year. And thus, in larger or smaller cycles, all time represented to the early Christians the mysteries of the Cross and the Risen life in hidden humanity. And as the sunflower turns from morning till evening to the sun, so did the early Church turn forever to her Lord, transforming week and year into a symbolical representation of His Spiritual Life.

Carefully distinguish this, the true historical view of the origin of the Lord's day, from a mere transference of a Jewish sabbath from one day to another. For St. Paul's teaching is distinct and clear, that the Sabbath is annulled; and to urge the observance of the day as indispensable to salvation was, according to him, to Judaize — "to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desired to be in bondage."

II. The modifications of this view.

The first modification has reference to those who conscientiously observed the day. He that observeth the day, observeth it to the Lord. Let him act, then, on that conviction: "Let him be fully persuaded in his own mind."

There is, therefore, a religious *observance* of the Sabbath-day possible.

We are bound by the spirit of the fourth commandment, so far as we are in the same spiritual state as they to whom it was given. The spiritual intent of Christianity is to worship God every day in the spirit. But, had this law been given in all its purity to the Jews, instead of turning every week-day into a sabbath, they would have transformed every sabbath into

a week-day; with no special day fixed for worship, they would have spent every day without worship. Their hearts were too dull for a devotion so spiritual and pure.

Therefore, a law was given, specializing a day, in order to lead them to the broader truth that every day is God's.

Now, so far as we are in the Jewish state, the fourth commandment, even in its rigor and strictness, is wisely used by us; nay, we might say, indispensable. For who is he who needs not the day? He is the man so rich in love, so conformed to the mind of Christ, so elevated into the sublime repose of heaven, that he needs no carnal ordinances at all, nor the assistance of one day in seven to kindle spiritual feelings, seeing he is, as it were, all his life in heaven already.

And, doubtless, such the Apostle Paul expected the Church of Christ to be. Anticipating the second Advent at once, not knowing the long centuries of slow progress that were to come, his heart would have sunk within him; could he have been told that at the end of eighteen centuries the Christian Church would be still observing days, and months, and times, and years,— and, still more, needing them.

Needing them, I say. For the Sabbath was made for man. God made it for men in a certain spiritual state, because they needed it. The need, therefore, is deeply hidden in human nature. He who can dispense with it must be holy and spiritual indeed. And he who, still unholy and unspiritual, would yet dispense with it, is a man who would fain be wiser than his Maker. We, Christians as we are, still need the law, both in its restraints, and in its aids to our weakness.

No man, therefore, who knows himself, but will gladly and joyfully use the institution. No man who knows the need of his brethren will wantonly desecrate it, or recklessly hurt even their scruples respecting its observance. And no such man can look with aught but grave and serious apprehensions on such an innovation upon English customs of life and thought, as the proposal to give public and official countenance to a scheme which will *invite* millions, I do not say to an irreligious, but certainly an unreligious use of the day of rest.

This, then, is the first modification of the broad view of a repealed Sabbath. Repealed though it be, there is such a thing as a religious observance of it. And, provided that those who are stricter than we in their views of its obligation observe it not from superstition, nor in abridgment of Christian liberty, nor from moroseness, we are bound, in Christian charity, to yield them all respect and honor. Let them act out their conscientious convictions. Let not him that observeth not despise him that observeth.

The second modification of the broad view is, that there is such a thing as a *religious non-observance* of the Sabbath. I lay a stress on the word religious. For St. Paul does not say that every non-observance of the Sabbath is religious: but that he who, not observing it, observeth it not to the Lord, is, because acting on conscientious conviction, as acceptable as the others, who in obedience to what they believe to be His will observe it.

He pays his non-observance to the Lord, who, feeling that Christ has made him free, striving to live all his days in the Spirit, and knowing that that which is

displeasing to God is not work nor recreation, but selfishness and worldliness, refuses to be bound by a Jewish ordinance which forbade labor and recreation only with a typical intent.

But he who, not trying to serve God on any day, gives Sunday to toil or pleasure, certainly observes not the day; but his non-observance is not rendered to the Lord. He may be free from superstition; but it is not Christ who has made him free. Nor is he one of whom St. Paul would have said that his liberty on the Sabbath is as acceptable as his brother's conscientious scrupulosity.

Here, then, we are at issue with the popular defence of public recreations on the Sabbath-day: not so much with respect to the practice, as with respect to the grounds on which the practice is approved. They claim liberty; but it is not Christian liberty. Like St. Paul, they demand a license for non-observance; only, it is not "non-observance to the Lord." For, distinguish well. The abolition of Judaism is not necessarily the establishment of Christianity: to do away with the Sabbath-day in order to substitute a nobler, truer, more continuous sabbath, even the sabbath of all time given up to God, is well. But to do away the special Rights of God to the Sabbath, in order merely to substitute the Rights of Pleasure, or the Rights of Mammon, or even the license of profligacy and drunkenness, — that, methinks, is not Paul's "Christian liberty."

The second point on which we join issue is the assumption that public places of recreation, which humanize, will therefore Christianize the people. It is taken for granted that architecture, sculpture, and

the wonders of Nature and Art which such buildings will contain, have a direct or indirect tendency to lead to true devotion.

Only in a very limited degree is there truth in this at all. Christianity will humanize; we are not so sure that humanizing will Christianize. Let us be clear upon this matter. Esthetics are not Religion. It is one thing to civilize and polish; it is another thing to Christianize. The Worship of the Beautiful is not the Worship of Holiness; nay, I know not whether the one may not have a tendency to disincline from the other.

At least, such was the history of ancient Greece. Greece was the home of the Arts, the sacred ground on which the worship of the Beautiful was carried to its perfection. Let those who have read the history of her decline and fall, who have perused the debasing works of her later years, tell us how music, painting, poetry, the arts, softened and debilitated and sensualized the nation's heart. Let them tell us how, when Greece's last and greatest man was warning in vain against the foe at her gates, and demanding a manlier and a more heroic disposition to sacrifice, that most polished and humanized people, sunk in trade and sunk in pleasure, were squandering enormous sums upon their buildings and their esthetics, their processions and their people's palaces, till the flood came, and the liberties of Greece were trampled down forever beneath the feet of the Macedonian conqueror.

No! the change of a nation's heart is not to be effected by the infusion of a taste for artistic grace. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid

which is Christ Jesus." Not Art, but the Cross of Christ. Simpler manners, purer lives, more self-denial, more earnest sympathy with the classes that lie below us, — nothing short of that can lay the foundations of the Christianity which is to be hereafter, deep and broad.

On the other hand, we dissent from the views of those who would arrest such a project by petitions to the legislature on these grounds.

1. It is a return backwards to Judaism and Law. It may be quite true that, as we suspect, such non-observance of the day is not to the Lord, but only a scheme of mere pecuniary speculation. Nevertheless, there is such a thing as a religious non-observance of the day; and we dare not "judge another man's servant; to his own master he standeth or falleth." We dare not assert the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, when an inspired apostle has declared it abrogated. We dare not refuse a public concession of that kind of recreation to the poor man which the rich have long not hesitated to take in their sumptuous mansions and pleasure-grounds, unrebuked by the ministers of Christ, who seem touched to the quick only when the desecration of the Sabbath is loud and vulgar. We cannot substitute a statute law for a repealed law of God. We may think, and we do, that there is much which may lead to dangerous consequences in this innovation; but we dare not treat it as a crime.

The second ground on which we are opposed to the ultra-rigor of Sabbath observance, especially when it becomes coërcive, is the danger of injuring the conscience. It is wisely taught by St. Paul that he

who does anything with offence—that is, with a feeling that it is wrong—does wrong. To him it is wrong even though it be not wrong abstractedly. Therefore it is always dangerous to multiply restrictions and requirements beyond what is essential; because men, feeling themselves hemmed in, break the artificial barrier, but, breaking it with a sense of guilt, do thereby become hardened in conscience, and prepared for transgression against commandments which are Divine and of eternal obligation. Hence it is that the criminal has so often in his confessions traced his deterioration in crime to the first step of breaking the Sabbath-day; and no doubt with accurate truth. But what shall we infer from this? Shall we infer, as is so often done upon the platform and in religious books, that it proves the everlasting obligation of the Sabbath? Or, shall we, with a far truer philosophy of the human soul, infer, in the language of St. Peter, that we have been laying on him "a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear"? —in the language of St. Paul, that "the motions of sin were by the law;" that the rigorous rule was itself the stimulating, moving cause of the sin; and that when the young man, worn out with his week's toil, first stole out into the fields to taste the fresh breath of a spring-day, he did it with a vague, secret sense of transgression; and that, having, as it were, drawn his sword in defiance against the established code of the religious world, he felt that from thenceforward there was for him no return, and so he became an outcast, his sword against every man, and every man's sword against him? I believe this to be the true account of the matter; and, believing it, I cannot but believe that

the false, Jewish notions of the Sabbath-day which are prevalent have been exceedingly pernicious to the morals of the country.

Lastly, I remind you of the danger of mistaking a "positive" law for a moral one. The danger is, that proportionably to the vehemence with which the law positive is enforced, the sacredness of moral laws is neglected. A positive law, in theological language, is a law laid down for special purposes, and corresponds with statute laws in things civil. Thus laws of quarantine and laws of exercise depend for their force upon the will of the legislature, and when repealed are binding no more. But a moral law is one binding forever; which a statute law may declare, but can neither make nor unmake.

Now, when men are rigorous in the enforcement and reverence paid to laws positive, the tendency is to a corresponding indifference to the laws of eternal Right. The written supersedes in their hearts the moral. The mental history of the ancient Pharisees who observed the Sabbath, and tithed mint, anise, and cummin, neglecting justice, mercy, and truth, is the history of a most dangerous but universal tendency of the human heart. And so, many a man, whose heart swells with what he thinks pious horror when he sees the letter delivered or the train run upon the Sabbath-day, can pass through the streets at night undepressed and unshocked by the evidences of the wide-spreading profligacy which has eaten deep into his country's heart. And many a man who would gaze upon the domes of a crystal palace, rising above the trees, with somewhat of the same feeling with which he would look on a temple dedicated to Jug-

gernaut, and who would fancy that something of the spirit of an ancient prophet was burning in his bosom, when his lips pronounced the Woe! woe! of a coming doom, would sit calmly in a social circle of English life, and scarcely feel uneasy in listening to its uncharitableness and its slanders; would hear, without one throb of indignation, the common dastardly condemnation of the weak for sins which are venial in the strong; would survey the relations of the rich and poor in this country, and remain calmly satisfied that there is nothing false in them, unbrotherly, and wrong. No, my brethren! let us think clearly and strongly on this matter. It may be that God has a controversy with this people. It may be, as they say, that our Father will chasten us by the sword of the foreigner. But, if He does, and if judgments are in store for our country, they will fall, not because the correspondence of the land is carried on upon the Sabbath day; nor because Sunday trains are not arrested by the legislature; nor because a public permission is given to the working-classes for a few hours' recreation on the day of rest: but because we are selfish men; and because we prefer Pleasure to Duty, and Traffic to Honor; and because we love our party more than our Church, and our Church more than our Christianity, and our Christianity more than Truth, and ourselves more than all. These are the things that defile a nation; but the labor and recreation of its Poor, these are not the things that defile a nation.

XV.

[Preached January 2, 1853.]

THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF JESUS.

Luke ii. 40. — "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him."

The ecclesiastical year begins with Advent, then comes Christmas-day. The first day of the natural year begins with the infancy of the Son of Man. To-day the Gospel proceeds with the brief account of the early years of Jesus.

The infinite significance of the life of Christ is not exhausted by saying that He was a perfect man. The notion of the earlier Socinians that He was a pattern man (*ψίλος ἄνθρωπος*), commissioned from Heaven with a message to teach men how to live, and supernaturally empowered to live in that perfect way Himself, is immeasurably short of truth. For perfection merely human does not attract — rather it repels. It may be copied in form; it cannot be imitated in spirit, — for men only imitate that from which enthusiasm and life are caught, — for it does not inspire nor fire with love.

Faultless men and pattern children, — you may admire them, but you admire coldly. Praise them as you will, no one is better for their example. No one blames them, and no one loves them; they kindle no

enthusiasm, they create no likenesses of themselves; they never reproduce themselves in other lives, — the true prerogative of all original life.

If Christ had only been a faultless Being, He would never have set up in the world a new type of character, which at the end of two thousand years is fresh and life-giving and inspiring still. He never would have regenerated the world. He never would have "drawn all men unto Him," by being lifted up a self-sacrifice, making self-devotion beautiful. In Christ the Divine and Human blended; Immutability joined itself to Mutability. There was in Him the Divine which remained fixed; the Human, which was constantly developing. One uniform Idea and Purpose characterized His whole life, with a Divine immutable unity throughout, but it was subject to the laws of human growth. For the soul of Christ was not cast down upon this world a perfect thing at once. Spotless? — yes. Faultless? — yes. Tempted in all points without sin? — yes. But perfection is more than faultlessness. All Scripture coïncides in telling us that the ripe perfection of His manhood was reached step by step. There was a power and a Life within Him which were to be developed, which could only be developed, like all human strength and goodness, by toil of brain and heart. Life up-hill all the way; and every foot-print by which He climbed left behind for us, petrified on the hard rock, and indurated into history forever, to show us when and where and how He toiled and won.

Take a few passages to prove that His perfection was gained by degrees. "It became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing

many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation *perfect* through suffering."

Again, "Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be *perfected*."

"Though He were a Son, yet *learned* He obedience." And in the context, "Jesus *increased*."

Now, see the result of this aspect of His perfectibility. In that changeless element of His Being which beneath all the varying phases of growth remained Divinely faultless, we see that which we can adore. In the ever-changing, ever-growing, subject therefore to feebleness and endearing mutability, we see that which brings Him near to us; makes Him lovable, at the same time that it interprets us to ourselves.

Our subject is the early development of Jesus. In this text we read of a three-fold growth

I. In strength.

II. In wisdom.

III. In grace.

First, it speaks to us simply of His early development. "The child grew."

In the case of all rare excellence that is merely human, it is the first object of the biographer of a marvellous man to seek for surprising stories of his early life. The appetite for the marvellous in this matter is almost instinctive and invariable. All men, almost, love to discover the early wonders which were prophetic of after-greatness. Apparently, the reason is, that we are unwilling to believe that wondrous excellence was attained by slow, patient labor. We get an excuse for our own slowness and stunted growth,

by settling it, once for all, that the *original* differences between such men and us were immeasurable. Therefore it is, I conceive, that we seek so eagerly for anecdotes of early precocity.

In this spirit the fathers of the primitive church collected legends of the early life of Christ, stories of superhuman infancy — what the infant and the child said and did. Many of these legends are absurd; all, as resting on no authority, are rejected.

Very different from this is the spirit of the Bible narrative. It records no marvellous stories of infantine sagacity or miraculous power, to feed a prurient curiosity. Both in what it tells and in what it does not tell, one thing is plain, that the human life of the Son of God was *natural*. There was first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn. In what it does *not* say; because, had there been anything preternatural to record, no doubt it would have been recorded. In what it *does* say; because that little is all unaffectedly simple. One anecdote, and two verses of general description, — that is all which is told us of the Redeemer's childhood.

The child, it is written, grew. Two pregnant facts. He was a child, and a child that grew in heart, in intellect, in size, in grace, in favor with God. Not a man in child's years. No hot-bed precocity marked the holiest of infancies. The Son of Man grew up in the quiet valley of existence, — in shadow, not in sunshine, not *forced*. No unnatural, stimulating culture had developed the mind or feelings; no public flattery, no sunning of infantine perfections in the glare of the world's show, had brought the temptation of the wilderness, with which His manhood grappled, too early on

His soul. We know that He was childlike, as other children; for in after-years His brethren thought His fame strange, and his townsmen rejected him. They could not believe *that one* who had gone in and out, ate and drank and worked, was He whose Name is Wonderful. The proverb, true of others, was true of Him: "A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." You know him in a *picture* at once, by the halo round his brow. There was no glory in His real life to mark Him. He was in the world, and the world knew Him not. Gradually and gently He woke to consciousness of life and its manifold meaning; found Himself in possession of a self; by degrees opened His eyes upon this outer world, and drank in its beauty. Early He felt the lily of the field discourse to Him of the Invisible Loveliness, and the ravens tell of God His Father. Gradually, and not at once, He embraced the sphere of human duties, and woke to His earthly relationships one by one — the Son, the Brother, the Citizen, the Master.

It is a very deep and beautiful and precious truth that the Eternal Son had a human and progressive childhood. Happy the child who is suffered to be and content to be what God meant it to be — a child while childhood lasts. Happy the parent who does not force artificial manners, precocious feeling, premature religion. Our age is one of stimulus and high pressure. We live, as it were, our lives out fast. Effect is everything, — results produced at once; something to show and something that may *tell*. The folio of patient years is replaced by the pamphlet that stirs men's curiosity to-day, and to-morrow is forgotten. "Plain

living and high thinking are no more." The town, with its fever and its excitements, and its collision of mind with mind, has spread over the country; and there is no country — scarcely home. To men who traverse England in a few hours, and spend only a portion of the year in one place, Home is becoming a vocable of past ages.

The result is, that heart and brain, which were given to last for seventy years, wear out before their time. We have our exhausted men of twenty-five, and our old men of forty. Heart and brain give way, — the heart hardens and the brain grows soft.

Brethren! the Son of God lived till thirty in an obscure village of Judea unknown, then came forth a matured and perfect Man, — with mind, and heart, and frame, in perfect balance of humanity. It is a Divine lesson! I would I could say as strongly as I feel deeply. Our stimulating artificial culture destroys depth. Our competition, our nights turned into days by pleasure, leave no time for earnestness. We are superficial men. Character in the world wants *root*. England has gained much; she has lost, also, much. The world wants what has passed away; and which, until we secure, we shall remain the clever shallow men we are, — a childhood and a youth spent in shade — a Home.

Now, this growth took place in three particulars.

I. In spiritual strength. "The child waxed strong in spirit."

Spiritual strength consists of two things — power of Will, and power of Self-restraint. It requires two

things, therefore, for its existence — strong feelings, and strong command over them.

Now, it is here we make a great mistake; we mistake strong feelings for strong character. A man who bears all before him, — before whose frown domestics tremble, and whose bursts of fury make the children of the house quake, — because he has his will obeyed, and his own way in all things, we call him a strong man. The truth is, *that* is the weak man: it is his passions that are strong; he, mastered by them, is weak. You must measure the strength of a man by the power of the feelings which he subdues, not by the power of those which subdue him.

And hence composure is very often the highest result of strength. Did we never see a man receive a flagrant insult, and only grow a little pale, and then reply quietly? That was a man spiritually strong. Or, did we never see a man, in anguish, stand as if carved out of solid rock mastering himself? or, one bearing a hopeless daily trial, remain silent, and never tell the world what it was that cankered his home-peace? That is strength. He who, with strong passions, remains chaste, — he who, keenly sensitive, with manly power of indignation in him, can be provoked, and yet refrain himself, and forgive, — these are strong men, spiritual heroes.

The child *waxed* strong, — spiritual strength is reached by successive steps. Fresh strength is got by every mastery of self. It is the belief of the savage, that the spirit of every enemy he slays enters into him and becomes added to his own, accumulating a warrior's strength for the day of battle; therefore he slays all he can. It is true in the spiritual warfare.

Every sin you slay, the spirit of that sin passes into you transformed into strength; every passion, not merely kept in abeyance by asceticism, but subdued by a higher impulse, is so much character strengthened. The strength of the passion not expended is yours still. Understand, then, you are not a man of spiritual power because your impulses are irresistible. They sweep over your soul like a tornado — lay all flat before them — whereupon you feel a secret pride of strength. Last week men saw a vessel on this coast borne headlong on the breakers, and dashing itself with terrific force against the shore. It embedded itself, a miserable wreck, deep in sand and shingle. Was that brig, in her convulsive throes, strong? or, was it powerless and helpless?

No, my brethren: God's spirit in the soul, — an inward power of doing the thing we will and ought, — that is strength, nothing else. All other force in us is only our weakness, — the violence of driving Passion. "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me," — that is Christian strength. "I cannot do the things I would," — that is the weakness of an unredeemed slave.

I instance one single evidence of strength in the early years of Jesus; I find it in that calm, long waiting of thirty years before He began His Work. And yet all the evils He was to redress were there, provoking indignation, crying for interference, — the hollowness of social life, the misinterpretations of Scripture, the forms of worship and phraseology which had hidden moral truth, the injustice, the priestcraft, the cowardice, the hypocrisies: He had long seen them all.

All those years His soul burned within him with a

Divine zeal and heavenly indignation. A mere *man* — a weak, emotional man, of spasmodic feeling, — a hot enthusiast, — would have spoken out at once, and at once been crushed. The Everlasting Word incarnate bided His own time: "Mine hour is not yet come," — matured His energies, condensed them by repression, and then went forth to speak, and do, and suffer. His hour was come. This is strength: the power of a Divine Silence; the strong will, to keep force till it is wanted; the power to wait God's time. "He that believeth," said the wise prophet, "shall not make haste."

II. Growth in wisdom, — "filled with wisdom."

Let us distinguish wisdom from two things. From information first. It is one thing to be well informed; it is another to be wise. Many books read, innumerable facts hived up in a capacious memory, this does not constitute wisdom. Books give it not; sometimes the bitterest experience gives it not. Many a heart-break may have come as the result of life-errors and life-mistakes, and yet men may be no wiser than before. Before the same temptations they fall again in the self-same way they fell before. Where they erred in youth they err still in age — a mournful truth! "Ever learning," said St. Paul, "and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth."

Distinguish wisdom again from talent. Brilliancy of powers is not the wisdom for which Solomon prayed. Wisdom is of the heart rather than the intellect; the harvest of moral thoughtfulness, patiently reaped in through years. Two things are required - Earnestness and Love. First, that rare thing, Earnestness, —

the earnestness which looks on life practically. Some of the wisest of the race have been men who have scarcely stirred beyond home, read little, felt and thought much. "Give me," said Solomon, "a wise and understanding heart." A heart which ponders upon life, trying to understand its mystery, not in order to talk about it like an orator, nor in order to theorize about it like a philosopher, but in order to know how to *live* and how to die.

And, besides this, love is required for wisdom, — the love which opens the heart and makes it generous, and reveals secrets deeper than prudence or political economy teaches, — for example, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Prudence did not calculate *that*; love revealed it. No man can be wise without love. Prudent — cunning: yes, but not wise. Whoever has closed his heart to love has got wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. A large, genial, loving heart — with that we have known a ploughman wise; without it, we know a hundred men of statesmen-like sagacity fools — profound, but not wise. There was a man who pulled down his barns and built greater, — a most sagacious man, getting on in life, acquiring, amassing, and all for self. The men of that generation called him, no doubt, wise: God said, "Thou fool."

Speaking humanly, the steps by which the wisdom of Jesus was acquired were two.

1. The habit of inquiry. 2. The collision of mind with other minds. Both these we find in this anecdote: His parents found Him with the doctors in the Temple, both hearing and asking them questions. For the mind of man left to itself is unproductive;

alone in the wild woods, he becomes a savage. Taken away from school early, and sent to the plough, the country boy loses, by degrees, that which distinguishes him from the cattle that he drives, and over his very features and looks the low animal expression creeps. Mind is necessary for mind. The Mediatorial system extends through all God's dealings with us. The higher man is the mediator between God and the lower man; only through man can man receive development.

For these reasons, we call this event at Jerusalem a crisis or turning point in the history of Him who was truly Man.

He had come from Nazareth's quiet valley and green slopes on the hill-side, where hill and valley, and cloud and wind, and day and night, had nourished his child's heart, — from communion with minds proverbially low, for the adage was, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" — to the capital of His country, to converse with the highest and most cultivated intellects. He had many a question to ask, and many a difficulty to solve. As, for instance, such as this: How could the religion accredited in Jerusalem — a religion of long prayers and church services, and phylacteries, and rigorous sabbaths — be reconciled with the stern, manly righteousness of which He had read in the old prophets: a righteousness, not of litany-makers, but of men with swords in their hands and zeal in their hearts, setting up God's kingdom upon earth? — a kingdom of Truth, and Justice, and Realities, — were *they* bringing in that kingdom? — And if not, who should? Such questions had to be felt, and asked, and pondered on. Thenceforth we

say, therefore, in all reverence, dated the intellectual life of Jesus. From that time "Jesus increased in *wisdom*."

Not that they, the doctors of the Temple, contributed much. Those ecclesiastical pedants had not much to tell Him that was worth the telling. They were thinking about theology, — He about Religion. They about rubrics and church services, — He about God His Father, and His Will. And yet He gained more from them than they from Him. Have we never observed that the deepest revelations of ourselves are often made to us by trifling remarks met with here and there in conversation and books, — sparks which set a whole train of thoughts on fire? Nay, that a false view given by an inferior mind has led us to a true one; and that conversations from which we had expected much light, turning out unsatisfactorily, have thrown us upon ourselves and God, and so become almost the birth-times of the soul? The truth is, it is not the amount which is poured in that gives wisdom, but the amount of creative mind and heart working on and stirred by what is so poured in. That conversation with miserable priests and formalists called into activity the One Creative Mind which was to fertilize the whole spiritual life of man to the end of time; and Jesus grew in wisdom by a conversation with pedants of the law.

What Jerusalem was to Him, a town life is to us. Knowledge develops itself in the heated atmosphere of town life. Where men meet, and thought clashes with thought, — where workmen sit round a board at work, — intellectual irritability must be stirred more than where men live and work alone. The march of

mind, as they call it, must go on. Whatever evils there may be in our excited, feverish modern life, it is quite certain that we know through it more than our forefathers knew. The workman knows more of foreign politics than most statesmen knew two centuries ago. The child is versed in theological questions, which only occupied master minds once. But the question is, whether, like the Divine Child in the Temple, we are turning knowledge into wisdom; and whether, understanding more of the mysteries of life, we are feeling more of its sacred law; and whether, having left behind the priests, and the scribes, and the doctors, and the fathers, we are about our Father's business, and becoming wise to God.

III. Growth in grace, — "the grace of God was upon Him." And this in three points:

1. The exchange of an earthly for a heavenly home.
2. Of an earthly for a heavenly parent.
3. The reconciliation to domestic duties.

First step: Exchange of an earthly for a heavenly home.

Jesus was in the Temple for the first time. That which was dull routine to others, through dead habit, was full of vivid impression, fresh life, and God, to Him. "My Father's business" — "My Father's house." How different the meaning of these expressions now from what it had been before! Before, all was limited to the cottage of the carpenter; now, it extended to the temple. He had felt the sanctities of a new home. In after-life the phrase which He had learned by earthly experience obtained a Divine

significance. "In my Father's house are many mansions."

Our first life is spontaneous and instinctive. Our second life is reflective. There is a moment when the life spontaneous passes into the life reflective. We live at first by instinct; then we look in, feel ourselves, — ask what we are, and whence we came, and whither we are bound. In an awful new world of mystery, and destinies, and duties, we feel God, and know that our true home is our Father's house, which has many mansions.

Those are fearful, solitary moments, in which the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joys. Father — mother — cannot share these; and to share is to intrude. The soul first meets God alone. So with Jacob when he saw the dream-ladder; so with Samuel when the Voice called him; so with Christ. So, with every son of man, God visits the soul in secrecy, in silence, and in solitariness. And the danger and duty of a teacher is two-fold. 1st, to avoid hastening that feeling — hurrying that crisis-moment, which some call conversion. 2d, to avoid crushing it. I have said that first religion is a kind of instinct; and if a child does not exhibit strong religious sensibilities, — if he seem "heedless, untouched by awe or serious thought," — still it is wiser not to interfere. He may be still at home with God; he may be worshipping at home; as has been said, with not less truth than beauty, he may be

> "Lying in Abraham's bosom all the year,
> And worship — at the Temple's inner shrine,"

God being with him when he knew it not. Very mysterious, and beautiful, and wonderful, is God's com-

muning with the unconscious soul before reflection comes. The second caution is not to quench the feeling. Joseph and the Virgin chid the Child for His absence: "Why hast thou dealt so with us?" They could not understand His altered ways, His neglect of apparent duties, His indifference to usual pursuits. They mourned over the change. And this reminds us of the way in which Affection's voice itself ministers to ruin. When God comes to the heart, and His presence is shown by thoughtfulness, and seriousness, and distaste to common business, and loneliness, and solitary musings, and a certain tone of melancholy, straightway we set ourselves to expostulate, to rebuke, to cheer, to prescribe amusement and gayeties, as the cure for seriousness which seems out of place. Some of us have seen that tried; and, more fearful still, seen it succeed. And we have seen the spirit of frivolity and thoughtlessness, which had been banished for a time, come back again, with seven spirits of evil more mighty than himself, and the last state of that person worse than the first. And we have watched the still small voice of God in the soul silenced. And we have seen the spirit of the world get its victim back again, and incipient Goodness dried up like morning dew upon his heart. And they that loved him did it — his parents, his teachers. They quenched the smoking flax, and turned out the lamp of God lighted in the soul.

The last step was reconciliation to domestic duties. He went down to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. The first step in spirituality is to get a distaste for common duties. There is a time when creeds, ceremonies, services, are distasteful; when the conven-

tional arrangements of society are intolerable burdens; and when, aspiring with a sense of vague longing after a goodness which shall be immeasurable, a duty which shall transcend mere law, a something which we cannot put in words, all restraints of rule and habit gall the spirit. But the last and highest step in spirituality is made in feeling these common duties again divine and holy. This is the true liberty of Christ, when a free man binds himself in love to duty. Not in shrinking from our distasteful occupations, but in fulfilling them, do we realize our high origin. And this is the blessed second childhood of Christian life. All the several stages towards it seem to be shadowed forth with accurate truthfulness in the narrative of the Messiah's infancy. First, the quiet, unpretending, unconscious obedience and innocence of home. Then, the crisis of inquiry; new, strange thoughts, entrance upon a new world, hopeless seeking of truth from those who cannot teach it, hearing many teachers, and questioning all; thence bewilderment and bitterness, loss of relish for former duties; and small consolation to a man in knowing that he is further off from heaven than when he was a boy. And then, lastly, the true reconciliation and atonement of our souls to God — a second spring-tide of life, a second Faith deeper than that of childhood, not instinctive, but conscious trust, childlike love come back again, childlike wonder, childlike implicitness of obedience, only deeper than childhood ever knew. When life has got a new meaning; when "old things are passed away, and all things are become new;" when earth has become irradiate with the feeling of our Father's business and our Father's Home.

XVI.

[Preached January 9, 1853.]

CHRIST'S ESTIMATE OF SIN

Luke xix. 10. — "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

These words occur in the history which tells of the recovery of Zaccheus from a life of worldliness to the life of God. Zaccheus was a publican; and the publicans were outcasts among the Jews, because, having accepted the office, under the Roman government, of collecting the taxes imposed by Rome upon their brethren, they were regarded as traitors to the cause of Israel. Reckoned a degraded class, they became degraded. It is hard for any man to live above the moral standard acknowledged by his own class; and the moral standard of the publican was as low as possible. The first step downwards is to sink in the estimation of others, — the next, and fatal step, is to sink in a man's own estimation. The value of character is, that it pledges men to be what they are taken for. It is a fearful thing to have no character to support — nothing to fall back upon, nothing to keep a man up to himself. Now, the publicans had no character.

Into the house of one of these outcasts the Son of Man had entered. It was quite certain that such an

act would be commented upon severely by people who called themselves religious; it would seem to them scandalous, an outrage upon decency, a defiance to every rule of respectability and decorum. No pious Israelite would be seen holding equal intercourse with a publican. In anticipation of such remarks, before there was time, perhaps, to make them, Jesus spoke these words: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

They exhibit the peculiar aspect in which the Redeemer contemplated sin.

There are two ways of looking at sin: One is the severe view. It makes no allowance for frailty; it will not hear of temptation, nor distinguish between circumstances. Men who judge in this way shut their eyes to all but two objects, — a plain law, and a transgression of that law. There is no more to be said: let the law take its course. Now, if this be the right view of sin, there is abundance of room left for admiring what is good, and honorable, and upright; there is positively no room provided for restoration. Happy if you have done well; but if ill, then nothing is before you but judgment and fiery indignation.

The other view is one of laxity and false liberalism. When such men speak, prepare yourself to hear liberal judgments and lenient ones; a great deal about human weakness, error in judgment, mistakes, an unfortunate constitution, on which the chief blame of sin is to rest — a good heart. All well, if we wanted, in this mysterious struggle of a life, only consolation. But we want far beyond comfort, — Goodness; and to be merely made easy when we have done wrong will not help us to *that!*

Distinct from both of these was Christ's view of guilt. His standard of Right was high, — higher than ever man had placed it before. Not moral excellence, but heavenly, He demanded. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Read the Sermon on the Mount. It tells of a purity as of snow resting on an Alpine pinnacle, white in the blue holiness of heaven; and yet, also, He, the All-pure, had tenderness for what was not pure. He who stood in Divine uprightness that never faltered felt compassion for the ruined, and infinite gentleness for human fall. Broken, disappointed, doubting hearts, in dismay and bewilderment, never looked in vain to Him. Very strange, if we stop to think of it, instead of repeating it, as a matter of course. For generally human goodness repels from it evil men; they shun the society and presence of men reputed good, as owls fly from light. But here was purity *attracting* evil; that was the wonder. Harlots and wretches stooped in infamy gathered round Him. No wonder the purblind Pharisees thought there must be something in Him like such sinners which drew them so. Like draws to like. If He chose their society before that of the Pharisees, was it not because of some congeniality in Evil? But they *did* crowd His steps, and that because they saw a hope opened out in a hopeless world for fallen spirits and broken hearts,—ay, and seared hearts. The Son of Man was forever standing among the lost; and His ever-predominant feelings were sadness for the evil in human nature, hope for the Divine good in it, and the Divine image never worn out wholly.

I perceive in this description three peculiarities, distinguishing Christ from ordinary men.

I. A peculiarity in the constitution of the Redeemer's moral nature.

II. A peculiarity in the objects of His solicitude.

III. A peculiarity in His way of treating guilt.

I. In His moral constitution. Manifested in that peculiar title which He assumed — The Son of Man.

Let us see what that implies.

1. It implies fairly His Divine origin; for it is an emphatic expression, and, as we may so say, an unnatural one. Imagine an apostle — St. Paul or St. John — insisting upon it perpetually that he himself was human. It would almost provoke a smile to hear either of them averring and affirming, I am the Son of Man; it would be unnatural, the affectation of condescension would be intolerable. Therefore, when we hear these words from Christ, we are compelled to think of them as contrasted with a higher Nature. None could, without presumption, remind men that He was their Brother, and a Son of Man, except One, who was also something higher, even the Son of God.

2 It implies the catholicity of His Brotherhood.

Nothing, in the judgment of historians, stands out so sharply distinct as race, — national character; nothing is more ineffaceable. The Hebrew was marked from all mankind. The Roman was perfectly distinct from the Grecian character; as markedly different as the rough English truthfulness is from Celtic brilliancy of talent. Now, these peculiar nationalities are seldom combined. You rarely find the stern old Jewish sense of holiness going together with the Athenian

sensitiveness of what is beautiful. Not often do you find together severe truth and refined tenderness. Brilliancy seems opposed to perseverance. Exquisiteness of Taste commonly goes along with a certain amount of untruthfulness. By Humanity, as a whole, we mean the aggregate of all these separate excellences. Only in two places are they all found together, — in the universal human race and in Jesus Christ. He having, as it were, a whole humanity in Himself, combines them all.

Now, this is the universality of the Nature of Jesus Christ. There was in Him no national peculiarity or individual idiosyncrasy. He was not the Son of the Jew, nor the Son of the Carpenter, nor the offspring of the modes of living and thinking of that particular century. He was the Son of Man. Once in the world's history was born a MAN. Once in the roll of ages, out of innumerable failures, from the stock of human nature one Bud developed itself into a faultless Flower. One perfect specimen of humanity has God exhibited on earth.

The best and most catholic of Englishmen has his prejudices. All the world over, our greatest writer would be recognized as having the English cast of thought. The pattern Jew would seem Jewish everywhere but in Judea. Take Abraham, St. John, St. Paul, place them where you will, — in China or in Peru — they are Hebrews; they could not command all sympathies; their life could not be imitable except in part. They are foreigners in every land, and out of place in every century, but their own. But Christ is the king of men, and "draws all men," because all character is in Him, separate from nationalities and limitations. As

if the life-blood of every nation were in His veins, and that which is best and truest in every man, and that which is tenderest and gentlest and purest in every woman, in His character. He is emphatically the Son of *Man*.

Out of this arose two powers of His sacred humanity, — the universality of His sympathies, and their intense particular personality.

The universality of His sympathies: for, compare Him with any one of the sacred characters of Scripture You know how intensely national they were, priests, prophets, and apostles, in their sympathies. For example, the apostles "marvelled that He spake with a woman of Samaria;" — just before His resurrection, their largest charity had not reached beyond this, — "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto *Israel?*" Or, to come down to modern times, when His spirit has been moulding men's ways of thought for many ages; — now, when we talk of our philanthropy and catholic liberality, here in Christian England, we have scarcely any fellow-feeling, true and genuine, with other nations, other churches, other parties, than our own; we care nothing for Italian or Hungarian struggles; we think of Romanists as the Jew thought of Gentiles; we speak of German Protestants in the same proud, wicked, self-sufficient way in which the Jew spoke of Samaritans.

Unless we bring such matters home, and away from vague generalities, and consider what we and all men are, or rather are not, we cannot comprehend with due wonder the mighty sympathies of the heart of Christ. None of the miserable antipathies that fence us from all the world bounded the outgoings of that

Love, broad, and deep, and wide as the heart of God. Wherever the mysterious pulse of human life was beating, wherever aught human was in struggle, there to Him was a thing not common or unclean, but cleansed by God and sacred. Compare the daily, almost indispensable language of our life with His spirit. "Common people?" — Point us out the passage where he called any people, that God His Father made, common? "Lower Orders?" — Tell us when and where He, whose home was the workshop of the carpenter, authorized you or me to know any man after the flesh as low or high? To Him who called Himself the Son of Man, the link was manhood. And *that* He could discern even when it was marred. Even in outcasts His eye could recognize the sanctities of a nature human still. Even in the harlot, "one of Eve's family;" — a son of Abraham even in Zaccheus.

Once more, out of that universal, catholic Nature rose another power, — the power of intense, particular, personal affections. He was the Brother and Saviour of the human race; but this because He was the Brother and Saviour of every separate man in it.

Now, it is very easy to feel great affection for a country as a whole; to have, for instance, great sympathies for Poland, or Ireland, or America, and yet not care a whit for any single man in Poland, and to have strong antipathies to every single individual American. Easy to be a warm lover of England, and yet not love one living Englishman. Easy to set a great value on a flock of sheep, and yet have no particular care for any one sheep or lamb. If it were killed, another of the same species might replace it. Easy to have fine, large, liberal views about the working-classes, or the emanci-

pation of the negroes, and yet never have done a loving act to one. Easy to be a great philanthropist, and yet have no strong friendships, no deep personal attachments.

For the idea of an universal Manlike sympathy was not new when Christ was born. The reality *was* new. But before this, in the Roman theatre, deafening applause was called forth by this sentence, — "I am a man, — nothing that can affect man is indifferent to me." A fine sentiment — that was all. Every pretence of realizing that sentiment, except one, has been a failure. One, and but one, has succeeded in loving man — and that by loving men. No sublime high-sounding language in His lips about educating the masses, or elevating the people. The charlatanry of our modern sentiment had not appeared then; it is but the parody of His Love.

What was His mode of sympathy with men? He did not sit down to philosophize about the progress of the species, or dream about a millennium. He gathered round Him twelve men. He formed one friendship, special, concentrated, deep. He did not give Himself out as the Leader of the Publican's cause, or the Champion of the Rights of the dangerous classes: but he associated with Himself Matthew, a publican called from the detested receipt of custom: he went into the house of Zaccheus, and treated him like a fellow-creature, a brother, and a son of Abraham. His catholicity, or philanthropy, was not an abstraction, but an aggregate of personal attachments.

II. Peculiarity in the objects of Christ's solicitude. He had come to seek and to save *the "lost."* The

world is lost, and Christ came to save the world. But, by the lost in this place, He does not mean the world; He means a special class, lost in a more than common sense, as sheep are lost which have strayed from the flock, and wandered far beyond all their fellows scattered in the wilderness.

Some men are lost by the force of their own passions: as Balaam was by love of gold; as Saul was by self-will ending in jealousy, and pride darkened into madness; as Haman was by envy indulged and brooded on; as the harlots were, through feelings pure and high at first, inverted and perverted; as Judas was by secret dishonesty, undetected in its first beginnings — the worst misfortune that can befall a tendency to a false life. And others are lost by the entanglement of outward circumstances, which make escape, humanly speaking, impossible. Such were the publicans, — men *forced*, like executioners, into degradation. An honest publican, or a holy executioner, would be miracles to marvel at. And some are lost by the laws of society, which, defending society, have no mercy for its outcasts, and forbid their return — fallen once forever.

Society has power to bind on earth; and what it binds is bound upon the soul indeed.

For a man or woman who has lost self-respect is lost indeed.

And, O! the untold world of agony contained in that expression — "a lost soul!" — agony exactly in proportion to the nobleness of original powers. For it is a strange and mournful truth, that the qualities which calculate to shine are exactly those which minister to the worst ruin. God's highest gifts, — talent,

beauty, feeling, imagination, power, — they carry with them the possibility of the highest heaven and the lowest hell. Be sure that it is by that which is highest in you that you may be lost. It is the awful warning, and not the excuse of evil, that the light which leads astray is light from heaven. The shallow fishing-boat glides safely over the reefs where the noble bark strands; it is the very might and majesty of her career that bury the sharp rock deeper in her bosom. There are thousands who are not lost (like the respectable Pharisees), because they had no impetuous impulses — no passion — no strong enthusiasm, by the perversion of which they could be lost.

Now, this will explain to us what there was in these lost ones which left a hope for their salvation, and which Jesus saw in them to seek and save. Outwardly men saw a crust of black scowling impenitence — reprobates, they called them. Below that outward crust ran a hot lava-stream of anguish. What was that? The coward fear of hell? Nay, hardened men defy hell. The anguish of the lost ones of this world is not fear of punishment. It was and is the misery of having quenched a light brighter than the sun; the intolerable sense of being sunk; the remorse of knowing that they were not what they might have been. And He saw that; He knew it was the germ of life, which God's spirit could develop into salvation.

It was His work and His desire to save such; and in this world a new and strange solicitude it was, for the world had seen before nothing like it.

Not half a century ago, a great man was seen stooping and working in a charnel-house of bones. Uncouth, nameless fragments lay around him, which the

workmen had dug up and thrown aside as rubbish. They belonged to some far-back age, and no man knew what they were or whence — few men cared. The world was merry at the sight of a philosopher groping among mouldy bones. But when that creative mind, reverently discerning the fontal types of living being in diverse shapes, brought together those strange fragments, bone to bone, and rib to claw, and tooth to its own corresponding vertebra, re-combining the wondrous forms of past ages, and presenting each to the astonished world as it moved and lived a hundred thousand ages back, then men began to perceive that a new science had begun on earth.

And such was the work of Christ. They saw Him at work among the fragments and mouldering wreck of our humanity, and sneered. But He took the dry bones such as Ezekiel saw in Vision, which no man thought could live, and He breathed into them the breath of life. He took the scattered fragments of our ruined nature; interpreted their meaning, showed the original intent of those powers, which were now destructive only; drew out from publicans and sinners yearnings which were incomprehensible, and feelings which were misunderstood; vindicated the beauty of the original intention; showed the Divine Order below the chaos; exhibited to the world once more a human soul in the form in which God had made it, saying to the dry bones, "Live!"

Only what in the great foreigner was a taste, in Christ was love. In the one, the gratification of an enlightened curiosity; in the other, the gratification of a sublime affection. In the philosopher, it was a longing to restore and reproduce the past; in Christ,

a hope for the future,—"to seek and to save that which was lost."

III. A peculiarity in His mode of treatment. How were those lost ones to be restored? The human plans are reducible to three. Government have tried chastisement for the reclamation of offenders. For ages that was the only expedient known either to church or state. Time has written upon it Failure. I do not say that penal severity is not needful. Perhaps it is, for protection, and for the salutary expression of indignation against certain forms of evil. But as a system of reclamation it has failed. Did the rack ever reclaim, in heart, one heretic? Did the scaffold ever soften one felon? One universal fact of history replies: Where the penal code was most sanguinary, and when punishments were most numerous, crime was most abundant.

Again, society has tried exclusion for life. I do not pretend to say that it may not be needful. It *may* be necessary to protect your social purity, by banishing offenders of a certain sort forever. I only say for recovery it is a failure. Who ever knew one case where the ban of exclusion was hopeless, and the shame of that exclusion reformed? Did we ever hear of a fallen creature made moral by despair? Name, if you can, the publican or the harlot, in any age, brought back to goodness by a Pharisee, or by the system of a Pharisee.

And once more, some governors have tried the system of indiscriminate lenity: they forgave great criminals, trusting all the future to gratitude; they passed over great sins,—they sent away the ringleaders of

rebellion with honors heaped upon them: they thought this was the Gospel; they expected dramatic emotion to work wonders. How far this miserable system has succeeded, let those tell us who have studied the history of our South African colonies for the last twenty years. We were tired of cruelty: we tried sentiment — we trusted to feeling. Feeling failed: we only made hypocrites, and encouraged rebellion by impunity. Inexorable severity, rigorous banishment, indiscriminate and mere forgivingness, all are failures.

In Christ's treatment of guilt we find three peculiarities: sympathy, holiness, firmness.

1. By human sympathy. In the treatment of Zaccheus this was almost all. We read of almost nothing else as the instrument of that wonderful reclamation. One thing only, — Christ went to his house self-invited. But that one was everything. Consider it: Zaccheus was, if he were like other publicans, a hard and hardened man. He felt people shrink from him in the streets. He lay under an imputation; and we know how that feeling of being universally suspected and misinterpreted makes a man bitter, sarcastic, and defiant. And so the outcast would go home, look at his gold, rejoice in the revenge he could take by false accusations; felt a pride in knowing that they might hate, but could not help fearing him; scorned the world, and shut up his heart against it.

At last, one whom all men thronged to see, and all men honored, or seemed to honor, came to him, — offered to go home and sup with him. For the first time for many years, Zaccheus felt that he was not despised, and the flood-gates of that avaricious, shut heart were opened in a tide of love and generosity.

"Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold."

He was reclaimed to human feeling by being taught that he was a man still; recognized and treated like a man. A Son of Man had come to "seek" him, the lost.

2. By the exhibition of Divine holiness.

The holiness of Christ differed from all earthly, common, vulgar holiness. Wherever it was, it elicited a sense of sinfulness and imperfection. Just as the purest-cut crystal of the rock looks dim beside the diamond, so the best men felt a sense of guilt growing distinct upon their souls. When the Anointed of God came near, "Depart from me," said the bravest and truest of them all, "for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

But, at the same time, the holiness of Christ did not awe men away from Him, nor repel them. It inspired them with hope. It was not that vulgar, unapproachable sanctity which makes men awkward in its presence, and stands aloof. Its peculiar characteristic was, that it made men enamored of goodness. It "drew all men unto Him."

This is the difference between greatness that is first-rate and greatness which is second-rate, — between heavenly and earthly goodness. The second-rate and the earthly draws admiration on itself. You say, "How great an act, — how good a man!" The first-rate and the heavenly imparts itself, — inspires a spirit. You feel a kindred something in you that rises up to meet it, and draws you out of yourself, making you better than you were before, and opening out the infinite possibilities of your life and soul.

And such preëminently was the holiness of Christ. Had some earthly great or good one come to Zaccheus' house, a prince or a nobleman, his feeling would have been, What condescension is there! But, when *He* came whose every word and act had in it Life and Power, no such barren reflection was the result; but, instead, the beauty of holiness had become a power within him, and a longing for self-consecration. "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."

3. By Divine sympathy, and by the Divine Image, exhibited in the speaking act of Christ, the lost was sought and saved. He was saved, as alone all fallen men can be saved. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he was changed into the same image." And this is the very essence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are redeemed by the Life of God without us, manifested in the Person of Christ, kindling into flame the Life of God that is within us. Without Him we can do nothing. Without Him the warmth that was in Zaccheus' heart would have smouldered uselessly away. Through Him it became Life and Light, and the lost was saved.

XVII.

[Preached January 16, 1853.]

THE SANCTIFICATION OF CHRIST.

John xvii. 19. — "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

THE prayer in which these words occur is given to us by the Apostle John alone. Perhaps only St. John *could* give it, for it belongs to the peculiar province of his revelation. He presents us with more of the heart of Christ than the other apostles; with less of the outward manifestations. He gives us more conversations, — fewer miracles; more of the inner life, — more of what Christ was, less of what Christ did.

St. John's mind was not argumentative, but intuitive. There are two ways of reaching truth: by reasoning out, and by feeling out. All the profoundest truths are felt out. The deep glances into truth are got by Love. Love a man, that is the best way of understanding him. Feel a truth, that is the only way of comprehending it. Not that you can put your sense of such truths into words, in the shape of accurate maxims or doctrines; but the truth is reached, notwithstanding. Compare 1 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

Now, St. John *felt out* truth. He understood his Lord by loving Him. You find no long trains of argument in St. John's writings; an atmosphere of contemplation pervades all. Brief, full sentences, glowing with imagery of which the mere prose intellect makes nonsense, and which a warm heart alone interprets, — that is the character of his writing; very different from the other apostles. St. Peter's knowledge of Christ was formed by impetuous mistakes, corrected slowly and severely. St. Paul's Christianity was formed by principles wrought out glowing hot, as a smith hammers out ductile iron, in his unresting earnest fire of thought, where the Spirit dwelt in warmth and light forever, kindling the Divine fire of inspiration. St. John and St. John's Christianity were formed by personal view of Christ, intercourse with Him, and silent contemplation. Slowly, month by month and year by year, he gazed on Christ in silence, and thoughtful adoration. "Reflecting as from a glass the glory of the Lord," he became like Him: caught His tones, His modes of thought, His very expressions, and became partaker of His inward life. A "Christ was formed in him."

Hence it was that this prayer was revealed to St. John alone of the apostles, and by him alone recorded for us. The Saviour's mind touched his; through secret sympathy he was inspired with the mystic consciousness of what had passed and what was passing in the deeps of the soul of Christ. Its secret longings and its deepest struggles were known to John alone.

This particular sentence in the prayer which I have taken for the text was peculiarly after the heart of the Apostle John. For I have said that to him the true life of Christ was rather the inner Life than the

outward acts of life. Now, this sentence from the lips of Jesus speaks of the Atoning Sacrifice as an inward mental act rather than as an outward deed; a self-consecration wrought out in the Will of Christ. For their sakes I am sanctifying myself. That is a resolve, — a secret of the inner Life. No wonder it was recorded by St. John.

The text has two parts.

I. The sanctification of Jesus Christ.

II. The sanctification of His people.

I. Christ's sanctification of Himself. "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

We must explain this word "sanctify;" upon it the whole meaning turns. Clearly, it has not the ordinary popular sense here of making holy. Christ *was* holy. He could not, by an inward effort or struggle, *make* Himself holy, for He was that already.

Let us trace the history of the word "sanctify" in the early pages of the Jewish history.

When the destroying angel smote the first-born of the Egyptian families, the symbolic blood on the lintel of every Hebrew house protected the eldest born from the plague of death. In consequence, a law of Moses viewed every eldest son in a peculiar light. He was reckoned as a thing devoted to the Lord, — redeemed, and therefore set apart. The word used to express this devotion is *sanctify*. "The Lord said unto Moses, *Sanctify* unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."

By a subsequent arrangement these first-born were

exchanged for the Levites. Instead of the eldest son in each family, a whole tribe was taken, and reckoned as set apart and devoted to Jehovah, just as now a substitute is provided to serve in war in another's stead. Therefore, the tribe of Levi were said to be *sanctified* to God.

Ask we what was meant by saying that the Levites were sanctified to God? The ceremony of their sanctification will explain it to us. It was a very significant one. The priest touched with the typical blood of a sacrificed animal the Levite's right hand, right eye, right foot. This was the Levite's sanctification. It devoted every faculty and every power, — of seeing, doing, walking, — the right-hand faculties, the best and choicest, — to God's peculiar service. He was a man set apart.

To sanctify, therefore, in the Hebrew phrase, meant to devote or consecrate. Let us pause for a few moments to gather up the import of this ceremony of the Levites.

The first-born are a nation's hope; they may be said to represent a whole nation. The consecration, therefore, of the first-born, was the consecration of the entire nation by their representatives. Now, the Levites were substituted for the first-born. The Levites consequently represented all Israel, and by their consecration the life of Israel was declared to be in idea and by right a consecrated life to God. But further still. As the Levites represented Israel, so Israel itself was but a part taken for the whole, and represented the whole human race. If any one thinks this fanciful, let him remember the principle of representation on which the whole Jewish system was built. For ex-

amp e — the first-fruits of the harvest were consecrated to God. Why? To declare that portion, and that only, to be God's? No; St. Paul says, as a part for the whole, to teach and remind that the whole harvest was His. "If the first-fruits be holy, the lump also is holy." So, in the same way, God consecrated a peculiar people to Himself. Why? The Jews say, because they alone are His. We say, as a part representative of the whole, to show in one nation what all are meant to be. The holiness of Israel is a representative holiness. Just as the consecrated Levite stood for what Israel was meant to be, so the anointed and separated nation represents forever what the whole race of man is in the Divine Idea, a thing whose proper life is perpetual consecration.

One step further. This being the true life of Humanity, name it how you will, — sanctification, consecration, devotion, sacrifice, — Christ, the Representative of the Race, submits Himself in the text to the universal law of this devotion. The true law of every life is consecration to God; therefore Christ says, I consecrate myself; else He had not been a Man in God's idea of manhood, — for the idea of Man which God had been for ages laboring to give through a consecrated tribe and a consecrated nation to the world, was the idea of a being whose life-law is *sacrifice*, every act and every thought being devoted to God.

Accordingly, this is the view which Christ Himself gave of His own Divine Humanity. He spoke of it as of a thing devoted by a Divine decree. "Say ye of Him, whom the Father hath *sanctified*, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?"

We have reached, therefore, the meaning of this word in the text, For their sakes I sanctify, that is, consecrate or devote myself. The first meaning of sanctify is to set apart. But to set apart for God is to devote or consecrate; and to consecrate a thing is to make it holy. And thus we have the three meanings of the word,—namely, to set apart, to devote, to make holy,—rising all out of one simple idea.

To go somewhat into particulars. This sanctification is spoken of here chiefly as three-fold: Self-devotion by inward resolve — self-devotion to the Truth — self-devotion for the sake of others.

1. He devoted Himself *by inward resolve*. "I sanctify myself." God His Father had devoted Him before. He had sanctified and sent Him. It only remained that this devotion should become by His own act *self*-devotion — completed by His own will. Now, in that act of will consisted His sanctification of Himself.

For, observe, this was done within; in secret, solitary struggle — in wrestling with all temptations which deterred Him from His work — in resolve to do it unflinchingly; in real human battle and victory.

Therefore this self-sanctification applies to the whole tone and history of His mind. He was forever devoting Himself to work — forever bracing His human spirit to sublime resolve. But it applies peculiarly to certain special moments, when some crisis, as on this present occasion, came, which called for an act of will.

The first of these moments which we read of came when he was twelve years of age. We pondered on it a few weeks ago. In the temple, that earnest conversation with the doctors indicates to us that He had begun to revolve His own mission in His mind; for

the answer to His mother's expostulations shows us what had been the subject of those questions He had been putting: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Solemn words, significant of a crisis in His mental history. He had been asking those doctors about His Father's business; what it was, and how it was to be done by Him of whom He had read in the prophets, even Himself. This was the earliest self-devotion of Messias; — the Boy was sanctifying Himself for life and manhood's work.

The next time was in that preparation of the wilderness which we call Christ's Temptation. You cannot look deeply into that strange story without perceiving that the true meaning of it lies in this, that the Saviour in that conflict was steeling His soul against the three-fold form in which temptation presented itself to Him in after-life, to mar or neutralize His ministry.

1st. To convert the hard, stony life of Duty into the comfort and enjoyment of this life; to barter, like Esau, life for pottage; to use Divine powers in Him only to procure bread of Earth.

2d. To distrust God, and try impatiently some wild, sudden plan, instead of His meek and slow-appointed ways, — to cast Himself from the temple, as we dash ourselves against our destiny.

3d. To do homage to the majesty of wrong; to worship Evil for the sake of success; making the world His own by force or by crooked policy, instead of suffering.

These were the temptations of His life, as they are of ours. If you search through His history, you find that all trial was reducible to one or other of these

three forms. In the wilderness His soul foresaw them all; they were all in spirit met then, fought and conquered before they came in their reality. In the wilderness He had sanctified and consecrated Himself against all possible temptation, and Life thenceforward was only the meeting of that in Fact which had been in Resolve met already — a vanquished foe.

I said He had sanctified Himself against every trial; I should have said, against every one except the last. The temptation had not exhibited the terrors and the form of Death; He had yet to nerve and steel Himself to that. And hence the lofty sadness which characterizes His later ministry, as He went down from the sunny mountain-tops of life into the darkening shades of the valley where lies the grave. There is a perceptible difference between the tone of His earlier and that of His later ministry, which, by its evidently undesigned truthfulness, gives us a strong feeling of the reality of the history.

At first all is bright, full of hope, signalized by success and triumph. You hear from Him joyous words of anticipated victory: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." And we recollect how His first sermon in the synagogue of Capernaum was hailed; how all eyes were fixed on Him, and his words seemed full of grace.

Slowly, after this, there comes a change over the spirit of His life. The unremitting toil becomes more superhuman: "I must work the work of Him that sent Me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." The cold presentiment of doom hangs more often on Him. He begins to talk to His disciples in mysterious hints of the betrayal and the cross. He is

going down into the cloudland, full of shadows where nothing is distinct, and His step becomes more solemn, and His language more deeply sad. Words of awe, the words as of a soul struggling to pierce through thick glooms of Mystery, and Doubt, and Death, come more often from His lips. For example: "Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour, but for this cause came I into the world." — "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." And here in the text is another of those sentences of mournful grandeur: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

Observe the present tense. Not I *shall* devote Myself, — but I sanctify, that is, I am sanctifying Myself. It was a mental struggle going on then. This prayer was, so to speak, part of His Gethsemane prayer, — the first utterances of it, broken by interruption, — then finished in the garden. The consecration and the Agony had begun — the long inward battle — which was not complete till the words came, too solemnly to be called triumphantly, though they were indeed the trumpet-tones of Man's grand victory, "It is finished."

2. The sanctification of Christ was self-devotion to the Truth.

I infer this, because He says, "I sanctify Myself, that they *also* might be sanctified through the truth." "Also" implies that what His consecration was, theirs was. Now, theirs is expressly said to be sanctification by the truth. That, then, was His consecration, too. It was the truth which devoted Him, and marked Him out for death.

For it was not merely death that made Christ's sacrifice the world's Atonement. There is no special virtue in mere death, even though it be the death of God's own Son. Blood does not please God. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner." Do you think God has pleasure in the blood of the righteous? — blood, merely as blood? — death, merely as a debt of nature paid? — suffering, merely as if suffering had in it mysterious virtue?

No, my brethren! God can be satisfied with that only which pertains to the conscience and the will; so says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Sacrifices could never make the comers thereunto perfect." The blood of Christ was sanctified by the Will with which He shed it; it is that which gives it value. It was a sacrifice offered up to conscience. He suffered as a Martyr to the Truth. He fell in fidelity to a cause. The sacred cause in which He fell was love to the human race: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man give his life for his friends." Now, that Truth was the Cause in which Christ died. We have His own words as proof: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, *to bear witness to the Truth.*"

Let us see how His death was a martyrdom of witness to Truth.

First, He proclaimed the identity between religion and Goodness. He distinguished religion from correct views, accurate religious observances, and even from devout feelings. He said that to be religious is to be good. "Blessed are the pure in heart . . . . Blessed are the merciful . . . . Blessed are the meek." Jus-

tice, mercy, truth—these He proclaimed as the real righteousness of God.

But, because He taught the truth of Godliness, the Pharisees became His enemies: those men of opinions and maxims; those men of ecclesiastical, ritual, and spiritual pretensions.

Again, He taught spiritual Religion. God was not in the temple; the temple was to come down. But Religion would survive the temple. God's temple was man's soul.

Because He taught spiritual worship, the priests became His enemies. Hence came those accusations that He blasphemed the temple; that He had said, contemptuously, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Once more, He struck a death-blow at Jewish exclusiveness; He proclaimed the truth of the character of God. God, the Father. The hereditary descent from Abraham was nothing; the inheritance of Abraham's faith was everything. God, therefore, would admit the Gentiles who inherited that faith. For God loved the world,— not a private few; not the Jew only, not the elder brother who had been all his life at home, — but the prodigal younger brother, too, who had wandered far and sinned much.

Now, because He proclaimed this salvation of the Gentiles, the whole Jewish nation were offended. The first time He ever hinted it at Capernaum, they took Him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw Him thence.

And thus, by degrees,— priests, pharisees, rulers, rich, and poor,— He had roused them all against Him; and the Divine Martyr of the Truth stood alone at last

beside the cross, when the world's life was to be won, without a friend.

All this we must bear in mind, if we would understand the expression, "I sanctify Myself." He was sanctifying and consecrating Himself for this, — to be a Witness to the Truth, — a devoted one, consecrated in His heart's deeps to die, — loyal to Truth, — even though it should have to give, as the reward of allegiance, not honors and kingdoms, but only a crown of thorns.

3. The self-sanctification of Christ was for the sake of others. "For their sakes." . . .

He obeyed the law of self-consecration for Himself, else He had not been man; for that law is the universal law of our human existence. But He obeyed it not for Himself alone, but for others also. It was vicarious self-devotion — that is, instead of others, as the Representative of them. "For their sakes," as an example, "that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

Distinguish between a model and an example. You copy the outline of a model; you imitate the spirit of an example. Christ is our Example; Christ is not our Model. You might copy the life of Christ — make Him a model in every act — and yet you might be not one whit more of a Christian than before. You might wash the feet of poor fishermen as He did; live a wandering life, with nowhere to lay your head. You might go about teaching, and never use any words but His words, never express a religious truth except in Bible language, have no home, and mix with publicans and harlots. Then Christ would be your model; you would have copied His life, like a picture, line for

line, and shadow for shadow, and yet you might not be Christlike.

On the other hand, you might imitate Christ, get His Spirit, breathe the atmosphere of thought which He breathed, do not one single act which He did, but every act in His Spirit; you might be rich, whereas He was poor; never teach, whereas He was teaching always; lead a life, in all outward particulars, the very contrast and opposite of His; and yet the spirit of His self-devotion might have saturated your whole being, and penetrated into the life of every act, and the essence of every thought. Then Christ would have become your Example; for we can only imitate that of which we have caught the spirit.

Accordingly, He sanctified Himself that He might become a living, inspiring Example, firing men's hearts, by love, to imitation, — a burning and a shining Light shed upon the mystery of Life, to guide by a spirit of warmth lighting from within. In Christ there is not given to us a faultless essay on the loveliness of self-consecration, to convince our reason how beautiful it is; but there is given to us a self-consecrated One: a living Truth, a living Person: a Life that was beautiful, a Death that we feel in our inmost hearts to have been Divine; and all this in order that the Spirit of that consecrated Life and consecrated Death, through love, and wonder, and deep enthusiasm, may pass into us, and sanctify us, also, to the Truth, in life and death. He sacrificed Himself that we might offer ourselves a living sacrifice to God.

II. Christ's sanctification of His people: "That they also might be sanctified through the truth."

To sanctify means two things. It means to devote, and it means to set apart. Yet these two meanings are but different sides of the same idea; for to be devoted to God is to be separated from all that is opposed to God.

Those whom Christ sanctifies are separated from two things: From the world's evil, and from the world's spirit.

1. From the world's evil. So in verse 15: "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Not from physical evil, not from pain; Christ does not exempt His own from such kinds of evil. Nay, we hesitate to call pain and sorrow evils, when we remember what bright characters they have made, and when we recollect that almost all who came to Christ came impelled by suffering of some kind or other. For example, the Syrophenician woman had been driven to "fall at His feet and worship Him," by the anguish of the tormented daughter whom she had watched. It was a widow that cast into the treasury all her living, and that widow poor.

Possibly Want and Woe will be seen hereafter, when this world of Appearance shall have passed away, to have been, not evils, but God's blessed angels, and ministers of His most parental love.

But the evil from which Christ's sanctification separates the soul is that worst of evils — properly speaking, the only evil — sin; revolt from God, disloyalty to conscience, tyranny of the passions, strife of our self-will in conflict with the loving Will of God. This is our foe, — our only foe, that we have a right to hate with perfect hatred, meet it where we will, and under

whatever form, in church or state, in false social maxims, or in our own hearts. And it was to sanctify or separate us from this that Christ sanctified or consecrated Himself. By the blood of His anguish, by the strength of His unconquerable resolve, we are sworn against it; bound to be, or else sinning greatly, in a world of evil, consecrated spirits.

2. The self-devotion of Christ separates us from the world's spirit.

Distinguish between the world's evil and the world's spirit. Many things which cannot be classed amongst things evil are yet dangerous as things worldly.

It is one of the most difficult of all ministerial duties to define what the world-spirit is. It cannot be identified with vice, nor can unworldliness be defined as abstinence from vice. The Old Testament saints were many of them great transgressors. Abraham lied; Jacob deceived; David committed adultery. Crimes dark surely, and black enough! And yet these men were unworldly — the spirit of the world was not in them. They erred and were severely punished; for crime is crime in whomsoever it is found, and most a crime in a saint of God. But they were beyond their age; they were not of the world. They were strangers and pilgrims upon earth. They were in the midst of innumerable temptations from within and from without, seeking after a better country, that is, an heavenly.

Again, you cannot say that worldliness consists in mixing with many people, and unworldliness with few. Daniel was unworldly in the luxurious, brilliant court of Babylon; Adam, in Paradise, had but one companion — that one was the world to him.

Again, the spirit of the world cannot be defined as

consisting in any definite plainness of dress or peculiar mode of living. If we would be sanctified from the world when Christ comes, we must be found not stripping off the ornaments from our persons, but the censoriousness from our tongues, and the selfishness from our hearts.

Once more, that which is a sign of unworldliness in one age is not a certain sign of it in another. In Daniel's age, when dissoluteness marked the world, frugal living was a sufficient evidence that he was not of the world. To say that he restrained his appetites, was nearly the same as saying that he was sanctified. But now, when intemperance is not the custom, a life as temperate as Daniel's might coëxist with all that is worst of the spirit of the world in the heart. Almost no man then was temperate who was not serving God; now, hundreds of thousands are self-controlled by prudence, who serve the world and self.

Therefore, you cannot define sanctification by any outward marks or rules. But he who will thoughtfully watch will understand what is this peculiar sanctification or separation from the world which Christ desires in His servants.

He is sanctified by the self-devotion of his Master from the world, who has a life in himself independent of the maxims and customs which sweep along with them other men. In his Master's words, "A well of water *in* him, springing up into everlasting life," keeping his life, on the whole, pure, and his heart fresh. His true life is hid with Christ and God. His motives, the aims and objects of his life, however inconsistent they may be with each other, however irregularly or feebly carried out, are yet, on the whole, above, not

here. His citizenship is in heaven. He may be tempted; he may err; he may fall: but still, in his darkest aberrations, there will be a something that keeps before him still the dreams and aspirations of his best days; a thought of the Cross of Christ, and the self-consecration that it typifies; a conviction that that is the Highest, and that alone the true Life. And that — if it were only that — would make him essentially different from other men, even when he mixes with them, and seems to catch their tone, — among them, but not one of them. And that Life within him is Christ's pledge that he shall be yet what he longs to be, — a something severing him, separating him, consecrating him. For him, and for such as him, the consecration prayer of Christ was made. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world: Sanctify them through thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth."

XVIII.

[Preached January 23, 1853.]

THE FIRST MIRACLE.

I. THE GLORY OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER.

John ii. 11. — "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."

This was the "beginning of Miracles" which Jesus did, and yet He was now thirty years of age. For thirty years He had done no miracle; and that is, in itself, almost worthy to be called a miracle. That He abstained for thirty years from the exertion of His wonder-working power, is as marvellous as that He possessed for three years the power to exert. He was content to live long in deep obscurity. Nazareth, with its quiet valley, was world enough for Him. There was no disposition to rush into publicity; no haste to be known in the world. The quiet consciousness of power which breathes in that expression, "Mine hour is not yet come," had marked His whole life. He could bide His time. He had the strength to wait.

This was true greatness, — the greatness of man, because also the greatness of God; for such is God's way in all He does. In all the works of God there is a conspicuous absence of haste and hurry. All that

He does ripens slowly. Six slow days and nights of creative force before man was made; two thousand years to discipline and form a Jewish people; four thousand years of darkness, and ignorance, and crime, before the fulness of the Time had come, when He could send forth His Son; unnumbered ages of war before the thousand years of solid peace can come. Whatever contradicts this Divine plan must pay the price of haste — brief duration. All that is done before the hour is come decays fast. All precocious things, ripened before their time, wither before their time — precocious fruit, precocious minds, forced feelings. "He that believeth shall not make haste."

We shall distribute the various thoughts which this event suggests under two heads.

I. The Glory of the Virgin Mother.
II. The Glory of the Divine Son.

I. The Glory of the Virgin Mother.

In the First Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul speaks of the glory of the woman as of a thing distinct from the glory of the man. They are the two opposite poles of the sphere of humanity. Their provinces are not the same, but different. The qualities which are beautiful as predominant in one are not beautiful when predominant in the other. That which is the glory of the one is not the glory of the other. The glory of her, who was highly favored among women, and whom all Christendom has agreed in contemplating as the type and ideal of her sex, was glory in a different order from that in which her Son exhibited the glory of a perfect manhood. A glory different in *degree*, of course: — the one was only human, the

other more than human — the Word made flesh. But different in *order*, too: — the one manifesting forth *her* glory, — the grace of womanhood; the other manifesting forth *His* glory, — the Wisdom and Majesty of Manhood, in which God dwelt.

Different orders or kinds of glory. Let us consider the glory of the Virgin, which is, in other words, the glory of what is womanly in character.

Remarkable, first of all, in this respect, is her considerateness. There is gentle, womanly tact in those words — "They have no wine." Unselfish thoughtfulness about others' comforts, not her own; delicate anxiety to save a straitened family from the exposure of their poverty; and, moreover, — for this is very worthy of observation, — carefulness about gross, material things: a sensual thing, we might truly say, — wine, the instrument of intoxication; yet see how her feminine tenderness transfigured and sanctified such gross and common things; how that wine which, as used by the revellers of the banquet, might be coarse and sensual, was in her use sanctified, as it was by unselfishness and charity, — a thing quite heavenly, glorified by the Ministry of Love.

It was so that, in old times, with thoughtful hospitality, Rebekah offered water at the well to Abraham's way-worn servant. It was so that Martha showed her devotion to her Lord even to excess, being cumbered with much serving. It was so that the women ministered to Christ out of their substance, — water, food, money. They took these low things of earth, and spiritualized them into means of hospitality and devotion.

And this is the glory of womanhood, — surely no

common glory, — surely one which, if she rightly comprehended her place on earth, might enable her to accept its apparent humiliation unrepiningly: the glory of unsensualizing coarse and common things, — sensual things, the objects of mere sense, — meat, and drink, and household cares, — elevating them, by the spirit in which she ministers them, into something transfigured and sublime.

The humblest mother of a poor family, who is cumbered with much serving or watching over a hospitality which she is too poor to delegate to others, or toiling for love's sake in household work, needs no emancipation in God's sight. It is the prerogative and the glory of her womanhood to consecrate the meanest things by a ministry which is not for self.

2. Submission.

"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." Here is the true spirit of Obedience. Not slavishness, but entire loyalty and perfect trust in a Person whom we reverence. She did not comprehend her Son's strange repulse and mysterious words; but she knew that they were not capricious words, for there was no caprice in Him; she knew that the law which ruled His will was Right, and that importunity was useless. So she bade them reverently wait in silence till His time should come.

Here is another distinctive glory of womanhood. In the very outset of the Bible, submission is revealed as her peculiar lot and destiny. If you were merely to look at the words as they stand, declaring the results of the Fall, you would be inclined to call that vocation of obedience a curse; but in the spirit of

Christ it is transformed, like Labor, into a blessing. In this passage one peculiar blessing stands connected with it.

Here a two-fold blessing is connected with it:— Freedom from all doubt, and prevailing power in prayer.

The first is freedom from all doubt. The Virgin seems to have felt no perplexity at that rebuke and seeming refusal; and yet, perplexity and misgiving would seem natural. A more masculine and imperious mind would have been startled, made sullen, or begun at once to sound the depths of metaphysics, reasoning upon the hardship of a lot which cannot realize all it wishes; wondering why such simple blessings are refused, pondering deeply on divine decrees, ending perhaps in scepticism. Mary was saved from this. She could not understand, but she could trust and wait. Not for one moment did a shade of doubt rest upon her heart. At once and instantly,—"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." And so, too, the Syrophenician woman was not driven to speculate on the injustice of her destiny by the harshness of Christ's reply. She drew closer to her Lord in prayer. Affection and submissiveness saved them both from doubt,—women both.

Now, there are whole classes of our fellow-creatures to whom, as a class, the anguish of religious doubt never, or rarely, comes. Mental doubt rarely touches woman. Soldiers and sailors do not doubt. Their religion is remarkable for its simplicity and childlike character. Scarcely ever are religious warriors tormented with scepticism or doubts. And in all, I believe for the same reason, the habits of feeling to

which the long life of obedience trains the soul. Prompt, quick, unquestioning obedience — that is the soil for faith.

I call this, therefore, the glory of womanhood. It is the true glory of human beings to obey. It is her special glory, rising out of the very weakness of her nature, — God's strength made perfect in weakness. England will not soon forget that lesson left her as the bequest of a great life. Her buried Hero's glory came out of that which was manliest in his character, the Virgin spirit of obedience.

The second glory resulting from it is prevailing power with God. Her wish was granted. — "What have I to do with thee?" were words that only asserted His own perfect independence. They were not the language of rebuke. As Messiah, He gently vindicated his acts from interference, showing the filial relation to be in its first strictness dissolved. But as Son He obeyed; or, to speak more properly, complied. Nay, probably His look had said that already, promising more than His words, setting her mind at rest, and granting the favor she desired.

Brethren, the subject of prayer is a deep mystery. To the masculine intellect it is a demonstrable absurdity. For, says logic, how can man's will modify the will of God, or alter the fixed decree? And if it cannot, where lies the use of prayer? But there is a something mightier than intellect, and truer than logic. It is the faith which works by love, — the conviction that, in this world of mystery, that which cannot be put in words, nor defended by argument, may yet be true. The will of Christ was fixed: what could be

the use of intercession? and yet the Virgin feeling was true, — her prayer would prevail.

Here is a grand paradox, which is the paradox of all prayer. The heart hopes *that* which to reasoning seems impossible. And I believe we never pray aright except when we pray in that feminine, childlike spirit which no logic can defend, feeling *as if* we modified the will of God, though that will is fixed.

It is the glory of the spirit that is affectionate and submissive, that it — ay, and it alone — *can* pray, because it alone can believe that its prayer will be granted; and it is the glory of that spirit, too, that its prayer will be granted.

3dly. In all Christian ages the especial glory ascribed to the Virgin Mother is purity of heart and life. Implied in the term "Virgin." Gradually, in the history of the Christian church, the recognition of this became idolatry. The works of early Christian art curiously exhibit the progress of this perversion. They show how Mariolatry grew up. The first pictures of the early Christian ages simply represent the woman. By and by, we find outlines of the Mother and the Child. In an after-age, the Son is seen sitting on a throne, with the Mother crowned, but sitting as yet below Him. In an age still later, the crowned Mother on a level with the Son. Later still, the Mother on a throne above the Son. And, lastly, a Romish picture represents the Eternal Son, in wrath, about to destroy the Earth, and the Virgin Intercessor interposing, pleading by significant attitude nor maternal rights, and redeeming the world from His vengeance. Such was, in fact, the progress of Virgin-worship

First, the woman reverenced for the Son's sake; then the woman reverenced above the Son, and adored.

Now, the question is, How came this to be? for we assume it as a principle that no error has ever spread widely that was not the exaggeration or perversion of a truth. And be assured that the first step towards dislodging error is to understand the truth at which it aims. Never can an error be permanently destroyed by the roots unless we have planted by its side the truth that is to take its place. Else you will find the falsehood returning forever, growing up again when you thought it cut up root and branch, appearing in the very places where the crushing of it seemed most complete. Wherever there is a deep truth unrecognized, misunderstood, it will force its way into men's hearts. It will take pernicious forms, if it cannot find healthful ones. It will grow as some weeds grow, in noxious forms, ineradicably, because it has a root in human nature.

Else how comes it to pass, after three hundred years of Reformation, we find Virgin-worship restoring itself again in this reformed England, where, least of all countries, we should expect it, and where the remembrance of Romish persecution might have seemed to make its return impossible? How comes it that some of the deepest thinkers of our day, and men of the saintliest lives, are feeling this Virgin-worship a necessity for their souls? — for it is *the* doctrine to which the converts to Romanism cling most tenaciously.

Brethren, I reply, because the doctrine of the worship of the Virgin has a root in truth, and no mere cutting and uprooting can destroy it: no Protestant thunders of oratory; no platform expositions; no Ref-

ormation societies. In one word, no mere negations, nothing but the full liberation of the truth which lies at the root of error, can eradicate error.

Surely we ought to have learnt that truth, by this time. Recollect how, before Christ's time, mere negations failed to uproot paganism. Philosophers had disproved it by argument; satirists had covered it with ridicule. It was slain a thousand times, and yet paganism lived on in the hearts of men; and those who gave it up returned to it again in a dying hour, because the disprovers of it had given nothing for the heart to rest on in its place. But when Paul dared to proclaim of paganism what we are proclaiming of Virgin-worship, — that paganism stood upon a truth, and *taught the truth*, — paganism fell forever. The Apostle Paul found in Athens an altar to the Unknown God. He did not announce in Athens lectures against heathen priestcraft; nor did he undertake to prove it, in the Areopagus, all a mystery of iniquity, and a system of damnable idolatries; — that is the mode in which we set about *our* controversies; — but he disengaged the truth from the error, — proclaimed the truth, and left the errors to themselves. The truth grew up, and the errors silently and slowly withered.

I pray you, Christian brethren, do not join those fierce associations which think only of uprooting error. There is a spirit in them which is more of earth than heaven, — short-sighted, too, and self-destructive. They do not make converts to Christ, but only controversialists, and adherents to a party. They compass sea and land. It matters little whether fierce Romanism or fierce Protestanism wins the day; but

it does matter whether or not in the conflict we lose some precious Christian truth, as well as the very epirit of Christianity.

What lies at the root of this ineradicable Virgin-worship? How comes it that, out of so few scripture sentences about her, — many of them like this rebuke, depreciatory, — learned men and pious men could ever have *developed*, as they call it, — or, as it seems to us, tortured and twisted, — a doctrine of Divine honors to be paid to Mary? Let us set out with the conviction that there must have been some reason for it, — some truth of which it is the perversion.

I believe the truth to be this. Before Christ, the qualities honored as Divine were peculiarly the virtues of the man: Courage, Wisdom, Truth, Strength. But Christ proclaimed the Divine nature of qualities entirely opposite: Meekness, Obedience, Affection, Purity. He said that the pure in heart should see God. He pronounced the beatitudes of meekness, and lowliness, and poverty of spirit. Now, observe these were all of the order of graces which are distinctively feminine; and it is the peculiar feature of Christianity, that it exalts not strength nor intellect, but gentleness, and lovingness, and Virgin purity.

Here was a new, strange thought given to the world. It was for many ages *the* thought: no wonder, — it was the one great novelty of the revealed religion. How were men to find expression for that idea which was working in them, vague and beautiful, but wanting substance — the idea of the Divineness of what is pure, above the Divineness of what is strong? Would you have had them say, simply, we had forgotten these things; now they are revealed, — now we know that

Love and Purity are as Divine as Power and Reason? My brethren, it is not so that men *worship*, — it is only so that men *think*. They think about qualities, — they worship *persons*. Worship must have a form. Adoration finds a Person; and, if it cannot find one, it will imagine one. Gentleness and purity are words for a philosopher; but a man whose heart wants something to adore will find for himself a gentle one — a pure one — Incarnate purity and love — gentleness robed in flesh and blood, before whom his knee may bend, and to whom the homage of his spirit can be given. You cannot adore except a Person.

What marvel if the early Christian found that the Virgin-mother of our Lord embodied this great idea? What marvel if he filled out and expanded, with that idea which was in his heart, the brief sketch given of her in the gospels, till his imagination had robed the woman of the Bible with the majesty of the Mother of God? Can we not *feel* that it must have been so? Instead of a dry, formal dogma of theology, the Romanist presented an actual woman, endued with every inward grace and beauty, and pierced by sorrows, as a living object of devotion, faith, and hope, — a personality instead of an abstraction. Historically speaking, it seems inevitable that the idea could scarcely have been expressed to the world except through an idolatry.

Brethren, it is an idolatry — in modern Romanism, a pernicious and most defiling one. The worship of Mary overshadows the worship of the Son. The love given to her is so much taken from Him. Nevertheless, let us not hide from ourselves the eternal truth of the idea that lies beneath the temporary falsehood

of the dogma. Overthrow the idolatry; but do it by substituting the truth.

Now, the truth alone which can supplant the worship of the Virgin is the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ. I say the perfect *humanity;* for perfect manhood is a very ambiguous expression. By man we sometimes mean the human race, made up of man and woman, and sometimes we only mean the masculine sex. We have only one word to express both ideas. The language in which the New Testament was written has two. Hence we may make a great mistake. When the Bible speaks of man the human being, we may think that it means man the male creature. When the Bible tells us Jesus Christ was the Son of Man, it uses the word which implies human being; it does not use the word which signifies one of the male sex, it does not dwell on the fact that He was *a* man, but it earnestly asserts that He was man. Son of a man He was not. Son of Man He was; for the blood, as it were, of all the race, was in His veins.

Now, let us see what is implied in this expression, Son of Man. It contains in it the doctrine of the Incarnation; it means the full humanity of Christ. Lately I tried to bring out one portion of its meaning. I said that He belonged to no particular age, but to every age. He had not the qualities of one clime or race, but that which is common to all climes and all races. He was not the Son of the Jew, nor the Son of the Oriental, — He was the Son of Man. He was not the villager of Bethlehem; nor one whose character and mind were the result of a certain training, peculiar to Judea, or peculiar to that century, — but He was *the Man.* This is what St. Paul insists on,

when he says that in Him there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free. A Humanity in which there is nothing distinctive, limited, or peculiar, but universal, — your nature and mine, the Humanity in which we all are brothers, bond or free. Now, in that same passage St. Paul uses another very remarkable expression: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female." That is the other thing implied in His title to the Son of Man. His nature had in it the nature of all nations; but also His heart had in it the blended qualities of both sexes. Our humanity is a whole made up of two opposite poles of character, — the manly and the feminine. In the character of Christ neither was found exclusively, but both in perfect balance. He was the Son of Man — the human being — perfect Man.

There was in Him the woman-heart as well as the manly brain, — all that was most manly, and all that was most womanly. Remember what He was in life: recollect His stern iron hardness in the temptation of the desert; recollect the calmness that never quailed in all the uproars of the people, the truth that never paltered, the strict severe integrity which characterized the Witness of the Truth; recollect the justice that never gave way to weak feeling, — which let the rich young ruler go his way to perish if he would, — which paid the tribute-money, — which held the balance fair between the persecuted woman and her accuser, but did not suffer itself to be betrayed by sympathy into any feeble tenderness, — the justice that rebuked Peter with indignation, and pronounced the doom of Jerusalem unswerv-

ingly. Here is one side or pole of human character, — surely not the feminine side. Now, look at the other. Recollect the twice-recorded tears, which a man would have been ashamed to show, and which are never beautiful in man except when joined with strength like His; and recollect the sympathy craved and yearned for as well as given, — the shrinking from solitude in prayer, — the trembling of a sorrow unto death, — the considerate care which provided bread for the multitude, and said to the tired disciples, as with a sister's rather than a brother's thoughtfulness, "Come ye apart into the desert and rest a while." This is the other side or pole of human character, — surely not the masculine.

When we have learnt and felt what is meant by Divine Humanity in Christ, and when we have believed it, not in a one sided way, but in all its fulness, then we are safe from Mariolatry; because we do not want it — we have the truth which Mariolatry labors to express, and, laboring ignorantly, falls into idolatry. But, so long as the male was looked upon as the only type of God, and the masculine virtues as the only glory of His character, so long the truth was yet unrevealed. This was the state of heathenism. And, so long as Christ was only felt as the Divine Man, and not the Divine Humanity, so long the world had only a one-sided truth.

One-half of our nature — the sterner portion of it — only was felt to be of God and in God. The other half — the tenderer and purer qualities of our souls — were felt as earthly. This was the state of Romanism from which men tried to escape by Mariolatry. And, if men had not learned that this side of our

nature too was made Divine in Christ, what possible escape was there for them, but to look to the Virgin Mary as the Incarnation of the purer and lovelier elements of God's character, reserving to her Son the sterner and the more masculine?

Can we not understand, too, how it came to pass that the Mother was placed above the Son, and adored more? Christianity had proclaimed Meekness, Purity, Obedience, as more Divine than Strength and Wisdom. What wonder if she who was gazed on as the type of Purity should be reckoned more near to God than He who had come, through misconception, to be looked on chiefly as the type of Strength and Justice?

There is a spirit abroad which is leading men to Rome. Do not call that the spirit of the Devil. It is the desire and hope to find there, in its tenderness, and its beauty, and its devotion, a home for those feelings of awe, and contemplation, and love, for which our stern Protestantism finds no shelter. Let us acknowledge that what they worship is indeed deserving of all adoration; only let us say that *what* they worship is, ignorantly, Christ. Whom they ignorantly worship let us declare unto them: Christ, their unknown God, worshipped at an idol-altar. Do not let us satisfy ourselves by saying, as a watchword, "Christ, not Mary:" say, rather, "In Christ all that they find in Mary." The Mother in the Son, the womanly in the soul of Christ. Divine Honor to the Feminine side of His character; joyful and unvarying acknowledgment that in Christ there is a revelation of the Divineness of submission, and love, and purity, and long-suffering, just as there was before, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, a rev

elation of the Divineness of courage, and strength, and heroism, and manliness.

Therefore it is we do not sympathize with those coarse expositions which aim at doing exclusive honor to the Son of God by degrading the life and character of the Virgin. Just as the Romanist has loved to represent all connected with her as mysterious and immaculate, so has the Protestant been disposed to vulgarize her to the level of the commonest humanity, and exaggerate into rebukes the reverent expressions to her in which Jesus asserted His Divine independence.

Rather reverence, not her, but that Idea and type which Christianity has given in her, — the type of Christian womanhood; which was not realized in her, — which never was and never will be realized in one single woman, — which remains ever a Divine Idea, after which each living woman is to strive.

And when I say reverence that Idea or type, I am but pointing to the relation between the Mother and the Son, and asking men to reverence that which He reverenced. Think we that there is no meaning hidden in the mystery that the Son of God was the Virgin's Son? To Him through life there remained the early recollections of a pure mother. Blessed beyond all common blessedness is the man who can look back to that. God has given to him a talisman which will carry him triumphant through many a temptation. To other men purity may be a name; to him it has been once a reality. "Faith in all things high beats with his blood." He may be tempted; he may err; but there will be a light from home shining forever on his path inextinguishably. By the grace of God, degraded he cannot be.

XIX.

[Preached January 30, 1853.]

THE FIRST MIRACLE.

II. THE GLORY OF THE DIVINE SON.

JOHN ii. 11 — "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."

In the history of this miracle, two personages are brought prominently before our notice. One is the Virgin Mary; the other is the Son of God. And these two exhibit different orders of glory, as well as different degrees. Different degrees: for the Virgin was only human; her Son was God manifest in the flesh. Different orders of glory: for the one exhibited the distinctive glory of womanhood; the Other manifested forth *His* glory, — the glory of perfect manhood.

Taking the Virgin as the type and representative of her sex, we found the glory of womanhood, as exhibited by her conduct in this parable, to consist in unselfish considerateness about others; in delicacy of tact; in the power of ennobling a ministry of coarse and household things, like the wine of the marriage feast, by the sanctity of affection; in meekness and lowly obedience, which was in the Fall her curse, in Christ her glory, transformed into a blessing and a

power; and lastly, as the name Virgin implies, the distinctive glory of womanhood we found to consist in purity.

Now, the Christian history first revealed these great truths. The gospels which record the life of Christ first, in the history of the world, brought to light the Divine glory of those qualities which had been despised. Before Christ came, the heathen had counted for divine the legislative wisdom of the man, — manly strength, manly truth, manly justice, manly courage. The life and the Cross of Christ shed a splendor from heaven upon a new and till then unheard-of order of heroism, — that which may be called the feminine order, — meekness, endurance, long-suffering, the passive strength of martyrdom. For Christianity does not say, Honor to the Wise, but, "Blessed are the **Meek.**" Not, Glory to the Strong, but, "Blessed are the **pure** in heart, for they shall see God." Not, The Lord is a man of war, Jehovah is His name, but, "God is **Love.**" In Christ, not intellect, but love, is consecrated. In Christ is magnified, not force of will, but the Glory of a Divine humility. "He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; *wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him."

Therefore it was, that from that time forward womanhood assumed a new place in this world. She in whom these qualities, for the first time declared Divine in Christ, were the distinctive characteristics, steadily and gradually rose to a higher dignity in human life. It is not to mere civilization, but to the Spirit of life in Christ, that woman owes all she has, and all she has yet to gain.

Now, the outward phases in which this Redemption

of the sex appeared to the world have been, as yet, chiefly three. There have been three ages through which these great truths of the Divineness of purity, and the strength and glory of obedience, the peculiar characteristics of womanhood, have been rising into their right acknowledgment. 1. The ages of Virgin-worship. 2. The ages of Chivalry. 3. The age of the three last centuries. Now, during the three Protestant centuries, the place and destinies of womanhood have been every year rising more and more into great questions. Her mission, as it is called in the cant language of the day — what it is — that is one of the subjects of deepest interest in the controversies of the day. And, unless we are prepared to say that the truth, which has been growing clearer and brighter for eighteen centuries, shall stop now exactly where it is, and grow no clearer, — unless we are ready to affirm that mankind will never learn to pay less glory to strength and intellect, and more to meekness, and humbleness, and pureness, than they do now, — it follows that God has yet reserved for womanhood a larger and more glorious field for her peculiar qualities and gifts, and that the truth contained in the Virgin's motherhood is unexhausted still.

For this reason, in reference to that womanhood and its destinies, of which St. Mary is the type, I thought it needful last Sunday to insist on two things, as of profound importance.

First, To declare in what her true glory consists. The only glory of the Virgin was the glory of true womanhood. The glory of true womanhood consists in being *herself;* not in striving to be something else. It is the false paradox and heresy of this present age

to claim for her as a glory the right to leave her sphere. Her glory lies *in* her sphere, and God has given her a sphere distinct; as in the Epistle to the church of Corinth, when, in that wise chapter, St. Paul rendered unto womanhood the things which were woman's, and unto manhood the things which were man's.

And the true correction of that monstrous rebellion against what is natural lies in vindicating Mary's glory, on the one side, from the Romanist, who gives to her the glory of God; and, on the other, from those who would confound the distinctive glories of the two sexes, and claim as the glory of woman what is, in the deeps of nature, the glory of the man.

Everything is created in its own order. Every created thing has its own glory. "There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." There is one glory of Manhood, and another glory of Womanhood. And the glory of each created thing consists in being true to its own nature, and moving in its own sphere.

Mary's glory was not immaculate origin, nor immaculate life, nor exaltation to Divine honors. She had none of these things. Nor, on the other hand, was it Force, or demanded rights, social or domestic, that constituted her glory. But it was the glory of simple womanhood; the glory of being true to the nature assigned her by her Maker; the glory of motherhood; the glory of "a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price." She was not the Queen of Heaven; but she was something nobler still, a creature content to be what God had made her;

in unselfishness, and humbleness, and purity, rejoicing in God, her Saviour, content that He had regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.

The second thing upon which I insisted was, that the only safeguard against the idolatrous error of Virgin-worship is a full recognition of the perfect Humanity of Christ. *A full* recognition: for it is only a partial acknowledgment of the meaning of the Incarnation when we think of Him as the Divine Man. It was not manhood, but humanity, that was made Divine in Him. Humanity has its two sides: — one side in the strength and intellect of manhood; the other in the tenderness, and faith, and submissiveness, of womanhood: Man and Woman, not man alone, make up human nature. In Christ, not one alone, but both, were glorified. Strength and Grace, Wisdom and Love, Courage and Purity, — Divine Manliness, Divine Womanliness. In all noble characters you find the two blended; in Him — the noblest — blended into one entire and perfect Humanity.

Unless you recognize and fully utter this whole truth, you will find Mariolatry forever returning, cut it down as you will. It must come back. It will come back. I had well-nigh said, it *ought* to come back, unless we preach and believe the full truth of God incarnate in Humanity. For, while we teach in our classical schools, as the only manliness, Pagan heroism of warrior and legislator, can we say that we are teaching both sides of Christ? Our souls were trained in boyhood to honor the heroic and the masculine. Who ever hinted to us that charity is the "more excellent way"? Who suggested that "he

which ruleth his spirit is greater than he which taketh a city"?

Again, we find our English society divided into two sections: One the men of business and action, exhibiting prominently the masculine virtues of English character, truth and honor, and almost taught to reckon forbearance and feeling as proofs of weakness; taught in the playground to believe that a chaste life is romance—false sentiment and strengthlessness of character taught there; and in after-life, that it is mean to forgive a personal affront.

The other section of our society is made up of men of prayer and religiousness; for some reason or other, singularly deficient in masculine breadth and strength, and even truthfulness of character; with no firm footing upon reality, not daring to look the real problems of social and political life in the face, but wasting their strength in disputes of words, or shrinking into a dim atmosphere of ecclesiastical dreaminess, unreal and effeminate. Dare we say that the full Humanity of Christ, in its double aspect, is practically adored amongst us? Have we not made a fatal separation between the manly and the feminine of character?—between the moral and the devout, so that we have men who are masculine and moral, and also men who are effeminate and devout? But where are our Christian men, in whom the whole Christ is formed,—all that is brave, and true, and wise, and at the same time all that is tender, and devout, and pure? Who ever taught us to adore in Christ all that is most manly, and all that is most womanly, that we might strive to be such in our degree ourselves? And if not, can you wonder that men, feel-

ing their Christianity imperfect, blindly strive to patch it up through Mariolotry?

I gather into a few sentences the substance of what was said last Sunday. I said that Christianity exhibited the Divine glory of the weaker elements of our human nature. Heathenism, nay, even Judaism, had as yet before Him only recognized the glory of the stronger and masculine. Now, the Romanist personified the masculine side of human nature in Christ. He personified gentleness and purity, the feminine side of human nature, in the Virgin Mary. No wonder that, with this cardinal error at the outset in his conceptions, he adored; and no wonder, since Christianity declared meekness and purity more Divine than strength and intellect, in process of time he came to honor the Virgin more than Christ. That I believe is the true history and account of Virgin worship.

The Bible personifies both sides of human nature the masculine and feminine of character, in Christ, of whom St. Paul declares, in the Epistle to the Galatians, "In him is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female." Neither *distinctively*, for in Him both the manly and the womanly of character divinely meet. I say, therefore, that the Incarnation of God in Christ is the true defence against Virgin-worship.

Think of Christ only as the masculine character, glorified by the union of Godhead with it, and your Christianity has in it an awful gap, a void, a want, — the inevitable supply and relief to which will be Mariolatry, however secure you may think yourself, however strong and fierce the language you now use.

Men who have used language as strong and fierce have become idolaters of Mary. With a half-thought of Christ, safe you are not. But think of Him as the Divine Human Being, in whom both sides of our double being are divine and glorified, and then you have the truth which Romanism has marred, and perverted into an idolatry pernicious in all; in the less spiritual worshippers sensualizing and debasing.

Now, there are two ways of meeting error. The one is that in which, in humble imitation of Christ and His apostles, I have tried to show you the error of the worship of Mary, — to discern the truth out of which the error sprung, firmly asserting the truth, forbearing threatening; certain that he in whose mind the truth has lodged has in that truth the safeguard against error.

The other way of meeting error is to overwhelm it with threats. To some men it seems the only way in which true zeal is shown. Well, it is very easy, requiring no self-control, but only an indulgence of every bad passion. It is very easy to call Rome the mother of harlots and abominations; very easy to use strong language about damnable idolatries; very easy for the apostles to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans, because they would not receive Christ, and then to flatter themselves that that was Godly zeal. But it might be well for us to remember His somewhat startling comment: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." There are those who think it a surer and a safer Protestantism to use those popular watchwords. Be it so. But, with God's blessing, that will not *I*. The majesty of truth needs other bulwarks than vulgar and cowardly vituperation. Coarse language and violent,

excusable three hundred years ago by the manners of that day, was bold and brave in the lips of the Reformers, with whom the struggle was one of life and death, and who might be called to pay the penalty of their bold defiances with their blood. But the same fierceness of language now, when there is no personal risk in the use of it, in the midst of hundreds of men and women ready to applaud and honor violence as zeal, is simply a dastardliness from which every generous mind shrinks. You do not get the Reformers' spirit by putting on the armor they have done with, but by risking the dangers which those noble warriors risked. It is not their big words, but their large, brave heart, that makes the Protestant. O, be sure that he whose soul has anchored itself to rest on the deep, calm sea of Truth, does not spend his strength in raving against those who are still tossed by the winds of error. Spasmodic violence of words is one thing, strength of conviction is another.

When, O, when shall we learn that loyalty to Christ is tested far more by the strength of our Sympathy with Truth than by the intensity of our hatred of error! I will tell you what to hate. Hate Hypocrisy; hate Cant; hate intolerance, oppression, injustice; hate Pharisaism; hate them as Christ hated them, with a deep, living, Godlike hatred. But do not hate *men* in intellectual error. To hate a man for his errors is as unwise as to hate one who, in casting up an account, has made an error against himself. The Romanist has made an error against himself. He has missed the full glory of his Lord and Master. Well, shall we hate him, and curse, and rant, and thunder at him? Or shall we sit down beside him, and try to sympathize

with him, and see things from his point of view, and strive to understand the truth which his soul is aiming at, and seize the truth for him and for ourselves, "meekly instructing those who oppose themselves"?

Our subject to-day is the glory of the Divine Son.

In that miracle, "He manifested forth His glory." Concerning that glory we say:

1. The glory of Christ did not *begin* with that miracle; the miracle only *manifested* it. For thirty years the wonder-working power had been in Him. It was not Diviner power when it broke forth into visible manifestation, than it had been when it was unsuspected and unseen. It had been exercised up to this time in common acts of youthful life—obedience to his mother, love to his brethren. Well, it was just as Divine in those simple, daily acts, as when it showed itself in a way startling and wonderful. It was just as much the life of God on Earth when He did an act of ordinary human love or human duty, as when He did an extraordinary act, such as turning water into wine. God was as much, nay, more, in the daily life and love of Christ, than He was in Christ's miracles. The miracle only made the hidden glory visible. The extraordinary only proved that the ordinary was Divine. That was the very object of the miracle. It was done to *manifest forth* His glory. And if, instead of rousing men to see the real glory of Christ in His other life, the miracle merely fastened men's attention on itself, and made them think that the only Glory which is Divine is to be found in what is wonderful and uncommon, then the whole intention of the miracle was lost.

Let us make this more plain by an illustration. To

the wise man, the lightning only manifests the electric force which is everywhere, and which for one moment has become visible. As often as he sees it, it reminds him that the lightning slumbers invisibly in the dew-drop, and in the mist, and in the cloud, and binds together every atom of the water that he uses in daily life. But to the vulgar mind the lightning is something unique, a something which has no existence but when it appears. There is a fearful glory in the lightning, because he sees it. But there is no startling glory and nothing fearful in the drop of dew, because he does not know, what the Thinker knows, that the flash is there in all its terrors.

So, in the same way, to the half-believer a miracle is the one solitary evidence of God. Without it he could have no certainty of God's existence.

But to the true disciple a miracle only *manifests* the Power and Love which are silently at work everywhere, — as truly and as really in the slow work of the cure of the insane, as in the sudden expulsion of the legion from the demoniac, — as divinely in the gift of daily bread, as in the miraculous multiplication of the loaves. God's glory is at work in the growth of the vine, and the ripening of the grape, and the process by which grape-juice passes into wine. It is not *more* glory, but only glory more *manifested*, when water at His bidding passes into wine. And be sure that if you do not feel, as David felt, God's presence in the annual miracle, — that it is *God*, which in the vintage of every year causeth wine to make glad the heart of man, — the sudden miracle at Capernaum would not have given you conviction of His presence. "If you hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will you be persuaded

though one rose from the dead." Miracles have only done their work when they teach us the glory and the awfulness that surrounds our common life. In a miracle, God for one moment shows Himself, that we may remember it is He that is at work when no miracle is seen.

Now, this is the deep truth of miracles, which most men miss. They believe that the life of Jesus was Divine, because He wrought miracles. But, if their faith in miracles were shaken, their faith in Christ would go. If the evidence for the credibility of those miracles were weakened, then to them the mystic glory would have faded off His history. They could not be sure that His Existence was Divine. That love, even unto death, would bear no certain stamp of God upon it. That life of long self-sacrifice would have had in it no certain unquestionable traces of the Son of God. See what that implies. If that be true, and miracles are the best proof of Christ's mission, God can be recognized in what is marvellous — God cannot be recognized in what is good. It is by Divine power that a human being turns water into wine. It is by power less certainly Divine that the same being witnesses to truth — forgives His enemies — makes it His meat and drink to do His Father's will, and finishes His work. We are more sure that God was in Christ when He said, "Rise up, and walk," than when He said, with absolving love, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee;" more certain when He furnished wine for wedding guests, than when He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." O, a strange, and low, and vulgar appreciation this of the true glory of the Son of God, the same false conception that runs

through all our life, appearing in every form, — God in the storm, and the earthquake, and the fire, — no God in the still small voice. Glory in the lightning-flash, — no glory and no God in the lowliness of the dew-drop. Glory to intellect and genius, — no glory to gentleness and patience. Glory to every kind of *power*, — none to the inward, invisible strength of the life of God in the soul of man.

"An evil and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Look at the feverish eagerness with which men crowd to every exhibition of some newly discovered Force, real or pretended. What lies at the bottom of this feverishness but an unbelieving craving after signs? — some wonder which is to show them the Divine Life, of which the evidence is yet imperfect? As if the bread they eat and the wine they drink, chosen by God for the emblems of his sacraments because the commonest things of daily life, were not filled with the Presence of His love; as if God were not around their path, and beside their bed, and spying out all their daily ways.

It is in this strange way that we have learned Christ. The miracles which were meant to point us to the Divinity of His Goodness have only dazzled us with the splendor of their Power. We have forgotten what His first wonder-work shows, that a miracle is only *manifested* glory.

2. It was the glory of Christ again to sanctify, that is, declare the sacredness of all things natural. All natural relationships, — all natural enjoyments.

All natural relationships. What He sanctified by His presence was a marriage. Now, remember what had gone before this. The life of John the Baptist

was the highest form of religious life known in Israel. It was the life ascetic. It was the life of solitariness and penitential austerity. He drank no wine; he ate no pleasant food; he married no wife; he entered into no human relationship. It was the law of that stern and in its way sublime life, to cut out every human feeling as a weakness, and to mortify every natural instinct, in order to cultivate an intenser spirituality. A life in its own order grand, but indisputably unnatural.

Now, the first public act of our Redeemer's life is to go with with His disciples to a marriage. He consecrates marriage, and the sympathies which lead to marriage. He declares the sacredness of feelings which had been reckoned carnal, and low, and human. He stamps His image on human joys, human connections, human relationships. He pronounces that they are more than human, — as it were, sacramental; the means whereby God's presence comes to us; the types and shadows whereby higher and deeper relationships become possible to us. For it is through our human affections that the soul first learns to feel that its destiny is Divine. It is through a mortal yearning, unsatisfied, that the spirit ascends, seeking a higher object. It is through the gush of our human tendernesses that the Immortal and the Infinite in us reveals itself. Never does a man know the force that is in him till some mighty affection or grief has humanized the soul. It is by an earthly relationship that God has typified to us and helped us to conceive the only true Espousal — the marriage of the soul to her Eternal Lord.

It was the glory of Christianity to pronounce all these human feelings sacred; therefore it is that the

Church asserts their sacredness in a religious ceremony; for example, that of marriage. Do not mistake. It is not the ceremony that makes a thing religious; a ceremony can only *declare* a thing religious. The church cannot make sacred that which is not sacred. She is but here on earth as the moon, the witness of the light in heaven—by her ceremonies and by her institutions, to bear witness to eternal truths. She cannot by her manipulations manufacture a child of the devil, through baptism, into a child of God; she can only authoritatively declare the sublime truth,—he is *not* the devil's child, but God's child, by right. She cannot make the bond of marriage sacred and indissoluble; she can only witness to the sacredness of that which the union of two spirits has already made; and such are her own words. Her minister is commanded by her to say, "Forasmuch as these two persons have *consented together*," — there is the sacred Fact of Nature;—"I pronounce that they be man and wife," —here is the authoritative witness to the fact.

Again, it was His glory to declare the sacredness of all natural enjoyments.

It was not a marriage only, but a marriage-*feast*, to which Christ conducted His disciples. Now, we cannot get over this plain fact, by saying that it was a religious ceremony; that would be mere sophistry. It was an indulgence in the festivity of life; as plainly as words can describe, here was a banquet of human enjoyment. The very language of the master of the feast about men who had well drunk tells us that there had been, not excess, of course, but happiness there, and merry-making.

Neither can we explain away the lesson by saying

that it is no example to us; for Christ was there to do good, and that what was safe for Him might be unsafe for us. For if His life is no pattern for us here in this case of accepting an invitation, in what can we be sure it *is* a pattern? Besides, He took His disciples there, and His mother was there; they were not shielded, as He was, by immaculate purity. He was there as a guest at first, as Messiah only afterwards; thereby He declared the sacredness of natural enjoyments.

Here again, then, Christ manifested His peculiar glory. The Temptation of the Wilderness was past; the baptism of John, and the life of abstinence to which it introduced, were over; and now the Bridegroom comes before the world in the true glory of Messiah, — not in the life of asceticism, but in the life of Godliness, — not separating from life, but consecrating it; carrying a Divine spirit into every simplest act, — accepting an invitation to a feast — giving to water the virtue of a nobler beverage. For Christianity does not destroy what is natural, but ennobles it. To turn water into wine, and what is common into what is holy, is indeed the glory of Christianity.

The ascetic life of abstinence, of fasting, austerity, singularity, is the lower and earthlier form of religion. The life of Godliness is the glory of Christ. It is a thing far more striking to the vulgar imagination to be religious after the type and pattern of John the Baptist, — to fast, to mortify every inclination, to be found at no feast, to wrap ourselves in solitariness, and abstain from all social joys; yes, and far *easier* so to live, and far easier *so* to win a character for reli-

giousness. A silent man is easily reputed wise. A man who suffers none to see him in the common jostle and undress of life easily gathers round him a mysterious veil of unknown sanctity, and men honor him for a saint. The unknown is always wonderful. But the life of Him whom men called a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, was a far harder and a far heavenlier religion. To shroud ourselves in no false mist of holiness: to dare to show ourselves as we are, making no solemn affectation of reserve or difference from others; to be found at the marriage-feast; to accept the invitation of the rich Pharisee Simon, and the scorned publican Zaccheus; to mix with the crowd of men, using no affected singularity, content to be creatures not too bright or good for human nature's daily food: and yet for a man amidst it all to remain a consecrated spirit, His trials and His solitariness known only to His Father; a being set apart, not *of* this world, alone in the heart's deeps with God; to put the cup of this world's gladness to His lips, and yet be unintoxicated; to gaze steadily on all its grandeur, and yet be undazzled, plain and simple in personal desires; to feel its brightness, and yet defy its thrall; — this is the difficult, and rare, and glorious life of God in the soul of Man. This, this was the peculiar glory of the life of Christ, which was manifested in that first miracle which Jesus wrought at the marriage-feast in Cana of Galilee.

XX.

[Preached March 20, 1853.]

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

JOHN x. 14, 15. — "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep."

As these words stand in the English translation, it is hard to see any connection between the thoughts that are brought together.

It is asserted that Christ is the good Shepherd, and knows His sheep. It is also asserted that He knows the Father; but between these two truths there is no express connection. And, again, it is declared that He lays down His life for the sheep. This follows directly after the assertion that He knows the Father. Again, we are at a loss to say what one of these truths has to do with the other.

But the whole difficulty vanishes with the alteration of a single stop and a single word. Let the words "even so" be exchanged for the word "and." Four times in these verses the same word occurs. Three times out of these four it is translated "and," — *and* know my sheep, *and* am known, *and* I lay down my life. All that is required, then, is, that, in consistency,

it shall be translated by the same word in the fourth case; for "even so" substitute "and;" then strike away the full stop after "mine," and read the whole sentence thus: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine as the Father knoweth me, *and* as I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep."

At once our Redeemer's thought becomes clear. There is a reciprocal affection between the Shepherd and the sheep. There is a reciprocal affection between the Father and the Son; and the one is the parallel of the other. The affection between the Divine Shepherd and His flock can be compared, for the closeness of its intimacy, with nothing but the affection between the Eternal Father and the Son of His love. As the Father knows the Son, so does the Shepherd know the sheep; as the Son knows the Father, so do the sheep know their heavenly Shepherd.

I. The pastoral character claimed by Christ.

II. The proofs which substantiate the claim.

I. The Son of Man claims to Himself the name of *Shepherd.*

Now, we shall not learn anything from that, unless we enter humbly and affectionately into the spirit of Christ's teaching. It is the heart alone which can give us a key to His words. Recollect *how* he taught. By metaphors, by images, by illustrations, boldly figurative, in rich variety, — yes, in daring abundance. He calls Himself a gate, a king, a vine, a shepherd, a thief in the night. In every one of these He appeals to certain feelings and associations. What He says can only be interpreted by such associations. They must

be understood by a living heart; a cold, clear intellect will make nothing of them. If you take those glorious expressions, pregnant with almost boundless thought, and lay them down as so many articles of rigid, stiff theology, you turn life into death. It is just as if a chemist were to analyze a fruit or a flower, and then imagine that he had told you what a fruit and a flower are. He separates them into their elements, names them, and numbers them; but those elements, weighed, measured, numbered in the exact proportions that made up the beautiful living thing, are not the living thing, — no, nor anything like it. Your science is very profound, no doubt; but the fruit is crushed, and the grace of the flower is gone.

It is in this way often that we deal with the words of Christ, when we anatomize them and analyze them. Theology is very necessary, chemistry is very necessary; but chemistry destroys life to analyze, murders to dissect; and theology very often kills religion out of words, before it can cut them up into propositions.

Here is a living truth, which our cold reasonings have often torn into dead fragments, — "I am the good Shepherd." In this northern England, it is hard to get the living associations of the East, with which such an expression is full.

The pastoral life and duty in the East is very unlike that of the shepherds on our bleak hill-sides and downs. Here the connection between the shepherd and the sheep is simply one of pecuniary interest. Ask an English shepherd about his flock, — he can tell you the numbers and the value; he knows the market in which each was purchased, and the remunerating price at which it can be disposed of. There is be-

fore him so much stock, convertible into so much money.

Beneath the burning skies and the clear starry nights of Palestine, there grows up between the shepherd and his flock an union of attachment and tenderness. It is the country where, at any moment, sheep are liable to be swept away by some mountain-torrent, or carried off by hill-robbers, or torn by wolves. At any moment their protector may have to save them by personal hazard. The shepherd-king tells us how, in defence of his father's flock, he slew a lion and a bear; and Jacob reminds Laban how, when he watched Laban's sheep, in the day the drought consumed. Every hour of the shepherd's life is risk. Sometimes, for the sake of an armful of grass in the parched summer days, he must climb precipices almost perpendicular, and stand on a narrow ledge of rock, where the wild goat will scarcely venture. Pitiless showers, driving snows, long hours of thirst, — all this he must endure, if the flock is to be kept at all.

And thus there grows up, between the man and the dumb creatures he protects, a kind of friendship. For this is, after all, the true school in which love is taught, dangers mutually shared, and hardships borne together; these are the things which make generous friendship, — risk cheerfully encountered for another's sake. You love those for whom you risk, and they love you; therefore it is that, not as here, where the flock is driven, the shepherd goes before, and the sheep follow him. They follow in perfect trust, even though he should be leading them away from a green pasture, by a rocky road, to another pasture, which they cannot

yet see. He knows them all, — their separate histories, their ailments, their characters.

Now, let it be observed, how much in all this connection there is of *heart*, — of real, personal attachment, almost inconceivable to us. It is strange how deep the sympathy may become between the higher and the lower being; nay, even between the being that has life and what is lifeless. Alone almost in the desert, the Arab and his horse are one family. Alone in those vast solitudes, with no human being near, the shepherd and the sheep feel a life in common. Differences disappear, the vast interval between the man and the brute — the single point of union is felt strongly. One is the love of the protector, the other the love of the grateful life; and so, between lives so distant, there is woven by night and day, by summer suns and winter frosts, a living net-work of sympathy. The greater and the less mingle their being together — they feel each other. — "The shepherd knows his sheep, and is known of them."

The men to whom Christ said these words felt all this and more, the moment He had said them, which it has taken me many minutes to draw out in dull sentences; for He appealed to the familiar associations of their daily life, and, calling Himself a Shepherd, touched strings which would vibrate with many a tender and pure recollection of their childhood. And unless we try, by realizing such scenes, to supply what they felt by association, the words of Christ will be only hard, dry, lifeless words to us; for all Christ's teaching is a Divine Poetry, luxuriant in metaphor, overflowing with truth too large for accurate sentences — truth which only a heart alive can

appreciate. More than half the heresies into which Christian sects have blundered have merely come from mistaking for dull prose what prophets and apostles said in those highest moments of the soul, when seraphim kindle the sentences of the pen and lip into poetry. "This is my body." — Chill that into prose, and it becomes Transubstantiation. "I am the Good Shepherd." — In the dry and merciless logic of a commentary, trying laboriously to find out minute points of ingenious resemblance in which Christ is like a shepherd, the glory and the tenderness of this sentence are dried up.

But try to feel, by imagining what the lonely Syrian shepherd must feel towards the helpless things which are the companions of his daily life, for whose safety he stands in jeopardy every hour, and whose value is measurable to him not by price, but by his own jeopardy, and then we have reached some notion of the love which Jesus meant to represent: that Eternal tenderness which bends over us, — infinitely lower though we be in nature, — and knows the name of each and the trials of each, and thinks for each with a separate solicitude, and gave itself for each with a sacrifice as special, and a love as personal, as if in the whole world's wilderness there were none other but that one.

To the name Shepherd Christ adds an emphatic word, of much significance: "I am the *Good* Shepherd." Good, not in the sense of benevolent, but in the sense of genuine, true-born, of the real kind, — just as wine of nobler quality is good compared with the cheaper sort; just as a soldier is good or noble who is a soldier in heart, and not a soldier by mere

profession or for pay. It is the same word used by St. Paul when he speaks of a good — that is, a noble — soldier of Christ. Certain peculiar qualifications make the genuine soldier; certain peculiar qualifications make the genuine or good shepherd.

Now, this expression distinguishes the shepherd from two sorts of men who may also be keepers of the sheep: shepherds, but not shepherds of the true blood. 1. From robbers. 2. From hirelings.

1. Robbers may turn shepherds; they may keep the sheep, but they guard them only for their own purposes — simply for the flesh and fleece; they have not a true shepherd's heart, any more than a pirate has the true sailor's heart and the true sailor's loyalty. There were many such marauders on the hills of Galilee and Judea; such, for example, as those from whom David and his band protected Nabal's flocks on Mount Carmel.

And many such nominal shepherds had the people of Israel had in bygone years; rulers in whom the art of ruling had been but king-craft; teachers whose instructions to the people had been but priestcraft. Government, statesmanship, teachership, — these are pastoral callings — sublime, even Godlike. For only consider it: wise rule, chivalrous protection, loving guidance, — what diviner work than these has the Master given to the shepherds of the people? But when the work is done, even well done, whether it be by statesmen or by pastors, for the sake of party, or place, or honor, or personal consistency, or preferment, it is not the spirit of the genuine shepherd, but of the robber. No wonder He said, "All that ever came before Me were thieves and robbers."

Again, hirelings are shepherds, but not good shepherds, of the right, pure kind; they are tested by danger. "He that is an hireling, and not the good shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep."

Now, a man is a hireling when he does his duty for pay. He may do it in his way faithfully. The paid shepherd would not desert the sheep for a shower or a cold night. But the lion and the bear — he is not paid to risk his life against them, and the sheep are not his, so he leaves them to their fate. So, in the same way, a man may be a hired priest, as Demetrius was at Ephesus: "By this craft we get our living." Or, a paid demagogue, a great champion of rights, and an investigator of abuses — paid by applause; and while popularity lasts, he will be a reformer, — deserting the people when danger comes. There is no vital union between the champion and defenceless, the teacher and the taught. The cause of the sheep is not *his* cause.

Exactly the reverse of this Christ asserts, in calling Himself the *Good* Shepherd. He is a good, genuine, or true-born sailor who feels that the ship is as it were his own; whose point of chivalrous honor is to save his ship rather than himself — not to survive her. He is a good, genuine, or true-born shepherd who has the spirit of his calling — is an enthusiast in it — has the true shepherd's heart, and makes the cause of the sheep his cause.

Brethren, the cause of man was the cause of Christ. He did no hireling's work. The only pay He got was hatred, a crown of thorns, and the cross. He might

have escaped it all. He might have been the Leader of the people and their King. He might have converted the idolatry of an hour into the hosannas of a lifetime. If He would but have conciliated the Pharisees, instead of bidding them defiance, and exasperating their bigotry against Him; if He would but have explained, and, like some demagogue called to account, trimmed away His sublime sharp-edged truths about oppression and injustice until they became harmless, because meaningless; if He would but have left unsaid those rough things about the consecrated Temple and the Sabbath-days; if He would but have left undisputed the hereditary title of Israel to God's favor, and not stung the national vanity by telling them that trust in God justifies the Gentile as entirely as the Jew; if He would but have taught less prominently that hateful doctrine of the salvability of the heathen Gentiles and the heretic Samaritans, and the universal Fatherhood of God; if He would but have stated with less angularity of edge His central truth, that not by mere compliance with law, but by a spirit transcending law, even the spirit of the cross and self-sacrifice, can the soul of man be atoned to God: — that would have saved Him. But that would have been the desertion of the cause — God's cause and man's — the cause of the ignorant defenceless sheep, whose very salvation depended on the keeping of that Gospel intact; therefore the Shepherd gave His life a Witness to the Truth, and a sacrifice to God. It was a profound truth that the populace gave utterance to when they taunted Him on the cross: "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." No, of course not; He that will save others *cannot* save Himself.

Of that pastoral character He gives here three proofs. I know My sheep — am known of Mine — lay down My life for the sheep.

1. I know My sheep as the Father knoweth Me. In other words, as unerringly as His Father read His heart, so unerringly did He read the heart of man and recognize His own.

Ask we how? An easy reply, and a common one, would be — He recognized them by the Godhead in Him; His mind was divine, therefore omniscient; He knew all things, therefore He knew what was in man; and therefore He knew His own.

But we must not slur over His precious words in this way. That Divinity of His is made the pass-key by which we open all mysteries with fatal facility, and save ourselves from thinking of them. We get a dogma and cover truth with it; we satisfy ourselves with saying Christ was God, and lose the precious humanities of His heart and life.

There is here a deep truth of human nature; for He does not limit that recognizing power to Himself, — He says that the sheep know Him as truly as He the sheep. He knew men on the same principle on which we know men, — the same on which we know Him. The only difference is in degree; He knows with infinitely more unerringness than we, but the knowledge is the same in kind.

Let us think of this. There is a certain mysterious tact of sympathy and antipathy by which we discover the like and unlike of ourselves in others' character. You cannot find out a man's opinions unless he chooses to express them; but his feelings and his

character you may. He cannot hide them; you feel them in his look and mien, and tones and motion.

There is, for instance, a certain something in sincerity and reality which cannot be mistaken, — a certain something in real grief which the most artistic counterfeit cannot imitate. It is distinguished by nature, not education. There is a something in an impure heart which purity detects afar off. Marvellous it is how innocence perceives the approach of evil which it cannot know by experience, just as the dove which has never seen a falcon trembles by instinct at its approach; just as a blind man detects by finer sensitiveness the passing of the cloud which he cannot see overshadowing the sun. It is wondrous how, the truer we become, the more unerringly we know the *ring* of truth, — discern whether a man be true or not, and can fasten at once upon the rising lie in word, and look, and dissembling act. Wondrous how the charity of Christ in the heart finely perceives the slightest aberration from charity in others, in ungentle thought or slanderous tone.

Therefore Christ knew His sheep, by that mystic power always finest in the best natures, most developed in the highest, by which Like detects what is like and what unlike itself. He was Perfect Love — Perfect Truth — Perfect Purity; therefore He knew what was in man, and felt, as by another sense, afar off the shadows of unlovingness, and falseness, and impurity.

No one can have read the Gospels without remarking that they ascribe to Him unerring skill in reading man. People, we read, began to show enthusiasm for Him. But Jesus did not trust Himself unto them,

"for He knew what was in man." He knew that the flatterers of to-day would be the accusers of to-morrow. Nathanael stood before Him. He had scarcely spoken a word; but at once, unhesitatingly, to Nathanael's own astonishment, — "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile!" There came to Him a young man with vast possessions: a single sentence, an exaggerated epithet, an excited manner, revealed his character. Enthusiastic and amiable, Jesus loved him; capable of obedience, on life's sunshine and prosperity, — ay, and capable of aspiration after something more than mere obedience, but not of sacrifice. Jesus tested him to the quick, and the young man failed. He did not try to call him back, for He knew what was in him and what was not. He read through Zacchæus when he climbed into the sycamore-tree, despised by the people as a publican, really a son of Abraham; through Judas, with his benevolent saying about the selling of the alabaster-box for the poor, and his false kiss; through the curses of the thief upon the cross, a faith that could be saved; through the zeal of the man who in a fit of enthusiasm offered to go with Him whithersoever He would. He read through the Pharisees, and His whole being shuddered with the recoil of utter and irreconcilable aversion.

It was as if His bosom was some mysterious mirror, on which all that came near Him left a sullied or unsullied surface, detecting themselves by every breath.

Now, distinguish that Divine power from that cunning sagacity which men call knowingness in the matter of character. The worldly wise have maxims and

rules; but the finer shades and delicacies of truth of character escape them. They would prudently avoid Zaccheus — a publican; they ——

There is a very solemn aspect in which this power of Jesus to know man presents itself. It is this which qualifies Him for judgment, — this perfection of human sympathy. Perfect sympathy with every most delicate line of good implies exquisite antipathy to every shadow of a shade of evil. God hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. On sympathy the final award of Heaven and Hell are built: Attraction and Repulsion, the law of the magnet. To each pole all that has affinity with itself — *to* Christ all that is Christlike, *from* Christ all that is not Christlike, — forever and forever. Eternal judgment is nothing more than the carrying out of these words, "I know my sheep;" — for the obverse of them is, "I never knew *you;* depart from me, all ye that work iniquity."

The second proof which Christ alleges of the genuineness of His pastorate is, that His sheep know *Him.*

How shall we recognize Truth Divine? What is the test by which we shall know whether it comes from God or not? They tell us we know Christ to be from God because He wrought miracles; we know a doctrine to be from God because we find it written, or because it is sustained by an universal consent of fathers.

That is — for observe what this argument implies — there is something more evident than truth; Truth cannot prove itself; we want something else to prove it. Our souls judge of truth, — our senses judge of miracles; and the evidence of our senses — the lowest

part of our nature — is more certain than the evidence of our souls, by which we must partake of God.

Now, to say so, is to say that you cannot be sure that it is mid-day, or morning sunshine, unless you look at the sun-dial; you cannot be sure that the sun is shining in the heavens unless you see his shadow on the dial-plate. The dial is valuable to a man who never reads the heavens, the shadow is good for him who has not watched the sun; but, for a man who lives in perpetual contemplation of the sun in heaven, the sunshine needs no evidence, and every hour is known.

Now, Christ says, "My sheep know *Me*." Wisdom is justified by her children. Not by some lengthened investigation, whether the shepherd's dress be the identical dress, and the staff and the crosier genuine, do the sheep recognize the shepherd. They know *him*, they hear his voice, they know him as a man knows his friend.

They know him, in short, *instinctively*. Just so does the soul recognize what is of God and true. Truth is like light; visible in itself, not distinguished by the shadows that it casts. There is a something in our souls of God, which corresponds with what is of God outside us, and recognizes it by direct intuition; something in the true soul which corresponds with truth, and knows it to be truth. Christ came with truth, and the true recognize it as true; the sheep know the Shepherd, wanting no further evidence. Take a few examples: "God is Love." — "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" — "He that saveth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." — "All things are possible to him that

believeth."—"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."—"God is a Spirit."

Now, the wise men of intellect and logical acumen wanted proof of these truths. Give us, said they, your credentials. "By what authority doest thou these things?" They wanted a sign from heaven to prove that the truth was true, and the life He led Godlike, and not devil-like. How can we be sure that it is not from Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, that these deeds and sayings come? We must be quite sure that we are not taking a message from hell as one from heaven. Give us demonstration,—chains of evidence, chapter and verse, authority.

But simple men had decided the matter already. They knew very little of antiquity, church authority, and shadows of coming events, which prophecy casts before; but their eyes saw the light, and their hearts felt the present God. Wise Pharisees and learned doctors said, to account for a wondrous miracle, "Give God the glory."

But the poor, unlettered man, whose blinded eye had for the first time looked on a face of love, replied, "Whether this man be a sinner or not, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

The well-read Jews could not settle the literary question, whether the marks of his appearance coïncided with the prophecies. But the Samaritans *felt* the life of God: "Now we believe, not because of thy word, but because we have heard him ourselves, and *know* that this is indeed the Christ."

The Shepherd had come, and the sheep knew His voice.

Brethren, in all matters of eternal truth, the soul is before the intellect, the things of God are spiritually discerned. You know truth by being true; you recognize God by being like Him. The scribe comes and says, I will prove to you that this is sound doctrine, by chapter and verse, by what the old and best writers say, by evidence such as convinces the intellect of an intelligent lawyer or juryman. Think you the conviction of faith is got in that way?

Christ did not teach like the scribes. He spoke His truth. He said, "If any man believe not, I judge him not; the word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." It was true, and the guilt of disbelieving it was not an error of the intellect, but a sin of the heart.

Let us stand upright; let us be sure that the test of truth is the soul within us. Not at second-hand can we have assurance of what is Divine, and what is not; only at first-hand. The sheep of Christ hear His voice.

The third proof given by Christ was pastoral fidelity: "I lay down my life for the sheep." Now, here is the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice; sacrifice of one instead of another; life saved by the sacrifice of life.

Most of us know the meagre explanation of these words which satisfies the Unitarians; they say that Christ merely died as a martyr, in attestation of the truths He taught.

But you will observe the strength of the expression which we cannot explain away, "I lay down my life *for*"—that is, instead of—"the sheep." If the Shepherd had not sacrificed Himself, the sheep must have been the sacrifice.

Observe, however, the suffering of Christ was not the same suffering as that from which He saved us. The suffering of Christ was death. But the suffering from which He redeemed us by death was more terrible than death. The pit into which He descended was the grave. But the pit in which we should have been lost forever was the pit of selfishness and despair.

Therefore St. Paul affirms, "If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your *sins*." If Christ's resurrection be a dream, and He be not risen from the grave of death, you are yet in the grave of guilt. He bore suffering to free us from what is worse than suffering — sin; temporal death, to save us from death everlasting; His life given as an offering for sin to save the soul's eternal life.

Now, in the text this sacrificing love of Christ is paralleled by the love of the Father to the Son. As He loved the sheep, so the Father had loved Him. Therefore, the sacrifice of Christ is but a mirror of the love of God. The love of the Father to the Son is self-sacrificing Love.

You know that shallow men make themselves merry with this doctrine. The sacrifice of God, they say, is a figment, and an impossibility. Nevertheless, this parallel tells us that it is one of the deepest truths of all the universe. It is the profound truth which the ancient fathers endeavored to express in the doctrine of the Trinity. For what is the love of the Father to the Son — Himself yet not Himself — but the grand truth of Eternal Love losing itself and finding itself again in the being of another? What is it but the sublime expression of the unselfishness of God?

It is a profound, glorious truth; I wish I knew how to put it in intelligible words. But, if these words of

Christ do not make it intelligible to the heart, how can any words of mine? The life of blessedness, the life of love, the life of sacrifice, the life of God, are identical. All love is sacrifice — the giving of life and self for others. God's life is sacrifice; for the Father loves the Son *as* the Son loves the sheep for whom He gave His life.

Whoever will humbly ponder upon this will, I think, understand the Atonement better than all theology can teach him. O, my brethren, leave men to quarrel as they will about the theology of the Atonement; here in these words is the religion of it, — the blessed, all-satisfying religion for our hearts. The self-sacrifice of Christ was the *satisfaction* to the Father.

How could the Father be *satisfied* with the death of Christ, unless He saw in the sacrifice mirrored His own love? — for God can be satisfied only with that which is perfect as Himself. Agony does not satisfy God, — agony only satisfied Moloch. Nothing satisfies God but the voluntary sacrifice of Love.

The pain of Christ gave God no pleasure: only the love that was tested by pain, — the love of the obedient. He was obedient unto death.

XXI.

[Preached Easter-day, March 27, 1853.]

THE DOUBT OF THOMAS.

JOHN xx. 29. — "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

THE day on which these words were spoken was the first day of the week. On that day Thomas received demonstration that his Lord was risen from the dead. On that same day, a week before, Thomas had declared that no testimony of others, no eyesight of his own, nothing short of touching with his hands the crucifixion marks in his Master's body, should induce him to believe a fact so unnatural as the resurrection of a human being from the grave. Those seven days between must, therefore, have been spent in a state of miserable uncertainty. How miserable, and how restless, none can understand but those who have felt the wretchedness of earnest doubt.

Doubt, moreover, observe, respecting all that is dear to a Christian's hopes. For if Christ were not risen, Christianity was false, and every high aspiration which it promised to gratify was thrown back on the disappointed heart.

Let us try to understand the doubt of Thomas.

There are some men whose affections are stronger than their understandings; they feel more than they think. They are simple, trustful, able to repose implicitly on what is told them,— liable sometimes to verge upon credulity and superstition, but, take them all in all, perhaps the happiest class of minds; for it is happy to be without misgivings about the love of God and our own eternal rest in Him. "Blessed," said Christ to Thomas, "are they that have believed."

There is another class of men whose reflective powers are stronger than their susceptible; they think out truth, — they do not feel it out. Often highly gifted and powerful minds, they cannot rest till they have made all their ground certain; they do not feel safe as long as there is one possibility of delusion left; they prove all things. Such a man was Thomas. He has well been called the rationalist among the apostles. Happy such men cannot be. An anxious and inquiring mind dooms its possessor to unrest. But men of generous spirit, manly and affectionate, they may be; Thomas was. When Christ was bent on going to Jerusalem, to certain death, Thomas said, "Let us go up, too, that we may die with Him." And men of mighty faith they may become, if they are true to themselves and their convictions. Thomas did. When such men do believe, it is a belief with all the heart and soul for life. When a subject has been once thoroughly and suspiciously investigated, and settled once for all, the adherence of the whole reasoning man, if given in at all, is given frankly and heartily, as Thomas gave it, — "My Lord, and my God."

Now, this question of a resurrection, which made Thomas restless, is the most anxious that can agitate

the mind of man. So awful in its importance, and out of Christ so almost desperately dark in its uncertainty, who shall blame an earnest man severely if he crave the most indisputable proofs?

Very clearly Christ did not. Thomas asked of Christ a sign; he must put his own hands into the prints. His Master gave him that sign or proof. He said, "Reach hither thy hand." He gave it, it is true, with a gentle and delicate reproof, — but He did give it. Now, from that condescension, we are reminded of the darkness that hangs round the question of a resurrection, and how excusable it is for a man to question earnestly until he has got proof to stand on. For, if it were not excusable to crave a proof, our Master never would have granted one. Resurrection is not one of those questions on which you can afford to wait; it is the question of life and death. There are times when it does not weigh heavily. When we have some keen pursuit before us, when we are young enough to be satisfied to enjoy ourselves, the problem does not press itself. We are too laden with the pressure of the present, to care to ask what is coming. But at last a time comes when we feel it will be all over soon, — that much of our time is gone, and the rest swiftly going. And let a man be as frivolous as he will at heart, it is a question too solemn to be put aside, — Whether he is going down into extinction and the blank of everlasting silence, or not. Whether, in those far ages, when the very oak which is to form his coffin shall have become fibres of black mould, and the church-yard in which he is to lie shall have become, perhaps, unconsecrated ground, and the spades of a generation yet unborn shall have exposed his bones,

those bones will be the last relic in the world to bear record that he once trod this green earth, and that life was once dear to him, Thomas, or James, or Paul. Or whether that thrilling, loving, thinking something, that he calls himself, has indeed within it an indestructible existence, which shall still be conscious, when everything else shall have rushed into endless wreck. O, in the awful earnestness of a question such as that, a speculation and a peradventure will not do; we must have proof. The honest doubt of Thomas craves a sign as much as the cold doubt of the Sadducee. And a sign shall be mercifully given to the doubt of love which is refused to the doubt of indifference.

This passage presents two lines of thought.

I. The naturalness of the doubts of Thomas, which partly excuses them.

II. The evidences of the Christian Resurrection.

I. The naturalness of the doubts of Thomas.

The first assertion that we make to explain those doubts is, that Nature is silent respecting a future life. All that reason, all that Nature, all that religion, apart from Christ, have to show us, is something worse than darkness. It is the twilight of excruciating uncertainty. There is enough in the riddle of this world to show us that there *may* be a life to come; there is nothing to make it certain that there *will* be one. We crave, as Thomas did, a sign either in the height above or in the depth beneath; and the answer seems to fall back like ice upon our hearts, There shall no sign be given you.

It is the uncertainty of twilight. You strain at something in the twilight, and just when you are be-

ginning to make out its form and color, the light fails you, and your eyelid sinks down, wet and wearied with the exertion. Just so it is when we strain into Nature's mysteries, to discern the secret of the Great Hereafter. Exactly at the moment when we think we begin to distinguish something, the light goes out, and we are left groping in darkness, — the darkness of the grave.

Let us forget for a moment that we ever heard of Christ: — what is there in life or nature to strengthen the guess that there is a life to come? There are hints — there are probabilities — there is nothing more. Let us examine some of those probabilities.

First, there is an irrepressible longing in our hearts. We *wish* for immortality. The thought of annihilation is horrible; even to conceive it is almost impossible. The wish is a kind of argument; it is not likely that God would have given all men such a feeling, if He had not meant to gratify it. Every natural longing has its natural satisfaction. If we thirst, God has created liquids to gratify thirst. If we are susceptible of attachment, there are beings to gratify that love. If we thirst for life and love eternal, it is likely that there are an eternal life and an eternal love to satisfy that craving.

Likely, I say; more we cannot say. A likelihood of an immortality of which our passionate yearnings are a presumption — nothing higher than a likelihood. And in weary moments, when the desire of life is not strong, and in unloving moments, there is not even a likelihood.

Secondly, corroborating this feeling we have the traditions of universal belief. There is not a nation,

perhaps, which does not in some form or other hold that there is a country beyond the grave where the weary are at rest. Now, that which all men everywhere and in every age have held, it is impossible to treat contemptuously. How came it to be held by all, if only a delusion? Here is another probability in the universality of belief. And yet, when you come to estimate this, it is too slender for a proof; — it is only a presumption. The universal voice of mankind is not infallible. It was the universal belief once, on the evidence of the senses, that the earth was stationary; — the universal voice was wrong. The universal voice might be wrong in the matter of a resurrection. It might be only a beautiful and fond dream, indulged till hope made itself seem to be a reality. You cannot build upon it.

Once again, — In this strange world of perpetual change, we are met by many resemblances to a resurrection. Without much exaggeration we call them resurrections. There is the resurrection of the moth from the grave of the chrysalis. For many ages the sculptured butterfly was the type and emblem of immortality. Because it passes into a state of torpor or deadness, and because from that it emerges by a kind of resurrection, — the same, yet not the same, — in all the radiance of a fresh and beautiful youth, never again to be supported by the coarse substance of earth, but destined henceforth to nourish its etherealized existence on the nectar of the flowers, — the ancients saw in that transformation a something added to their hopes of immortality. It was their beautiful symbol of the soul's indestructibility.

Again, there is a kind of resurrection when the

spring brings vigor and motion back to the frozen pulse of the winter world. Let any one go into the fields at this spring season of the year. Let him mark the busy preparations for life which are going on. Life is at work in every emerald bud, in the bursting bark of every polished bough, in the greening tints of every brown hill-side. A month ago everything was as still and cold as the dead silence which chills the heart in the highest regions of the glacier solitudes. Life is coming back to a dead world. It is a resurrection, surely! The return of freshness to the frozen world is not less marvellous than the return of sensibility to a heart which has ceased to beat. If one has taken place, the other is not impossible.

And yet all this, valuable as it is in the way of suggestiveness, is worth nothing in the way of proof. It is worth everything to the heart, for it strengthens the dim guesses and vague intimations which the heart had formed already. It is worth nothing to the intellect; for the moment we come to argue the matter, we find how little there is to rest upon in these analogies. They are no real resurrections, after all; they only look like resurrections. The chrysalis only *seemed* dead; the tree in winter only seemed to have lost its vitality. Show us a butterfly, which has been dried and crushed, fluttering its brilliant wings next year again. Show us a tree, plucked up by the roots and seasoned by exposure, the vital force really killed out, putting forth its leaves again,—then we should have a real parallel to a resurrection. But nature does not show us that. So that all we have got in the butterfly and the spring are illustrations exquisitely in point

after immortality is proved, but in themselves no proofs at all.

Further still. Look at it in another point of view, and it is a dark prospect. Human history behind, and human history before, both give a stern "No," in reply to the question, Shall we rise again?

Six thousand years of human existence have passed away, — countless armies of the dead have set sail from the shores of time. No traveller has returned from the still land beyond. More than one hundred and fifty generations have done their work, and sunk into the dust again, and still there is not a voice, there is not a whisper, from the grave, to tell us whether, indeed, those myriads are in existence still. Besides, why should they be? Talk as you will of the grandeur of man, why should it not be honor enough for him — more than enough to satisfy a thing so mean — to have had his twenty or his seventy years' life-rent of God's universe? Why must such a thing, apart from proof, rise up and claim to himself an exclusive immortality? Man's majesty! man's worth! — the difference between him and the elephant or ape is too degradingly small to venture much on. That is not all; instead of looking backwards, now look forwards. The wisest thinkers tell us that there are already on the globe traces of a demonstration that the human race is drawing to its close. Each of the great human families has had its day, — its infancy, its manhood, its decline. The two last races that have not been tried are on the stage of earth, doing their work now. There is no other to succeed them. Man is but of yesterday, and yet his race is well-nigh done. Man is wearing out, as everything before him has been worn

out. In a few more centuries the crust of earth will be the sepulchre of the race of man, as it has been the sepulchre of extinct races of palm-trees, and ferns, and gigantic reptiles. The time is near when the bones of the last human being will be given to the dust. It is historically certain that man has quite lately, within a few thousand years, been called into existence. It is certain that, before very long, the race must be extinct.

Now, look at all this without Christ, and tell us whether it be possible to escape such misgivings and such reasonings as these, which rise out of such an aspect of things. Man, this thing of yesterday, which sprung out of the eternal nothingness, why may he not sink, after he has played his appointed part, into nothingness again? You see the leaves sinking one by one in autumn, till the heaps below are rich with the spoils of a whole year's vegetation. They were bright and perfect while they lasted, — each leaf a miracle of beauty and contrivance. There is no resurrection for the leaves, — why must there be one for man? Go and stand, some summer evening, by the river-side: you will see the May-fly sporting out its little hour, in dense masses of insect life, darkening the air a few feet above the gentle swell of the water. The heat of that very afternoon brought them into existence. Every gauze wing is traversed by ten thousand fibres, which defy the microscope to find a flaw in their perfection. The Omniscience and the care bestowed upon that exquisite anatomy, one would think, cannot be destined to be wasted in a moment. Yet so it is; when the sun has sunk below the trees, its little life is done. Yesterday it was not; to-morrow

it will not be. God has bidden it be happy for one evening. It has no right or claim to a second; and in the universe that marvellous life has appeared once, and will appear no more. May not the race of man sink like the generations of the May-fly? Why cannot the Creator so lavish in His resources, afford to annihilate souls as He annihilates insects? Would it not almost enhance His glory to believe it?

That, brethren, is the question; and nature has no reply. The fearful secret of sixty centuries has not yet found a voice. The whole evidence lies before us. We know what the greatest and wisest have had to say in favor of an immortality; and we know how, after eagerly devouring all their arguments, our hearts have sunk back in cold disappointment; and to every proof, as we read, our lips have replied, mournfully, That will not stand. Search through tradition, history, the world within you and the world without, — except in Christ there is not the shadow of a shade of proof that man survives the grave.

I do not wonder that Thomas, with that honest, accurate mind of his, wishing that the news were true, yet dreading lest it should be false, and determined to guard against every possible illusion, delusion, and deception, said, so strongly, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe."

II. The Christian proofs of a Resurrection.

This text tells us of two kinds of proof. The first is the evidence of the senses — "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed." The other is

the evidence of the Spirit — "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Let us scrutinize the external evidence of Christ's resurrection which those verses furnish. It is a two-fold evidence. The witness of the Apostle Thomas, who was satisfied with the proofs; the witness of St. John, who records the circumstance of his satisfaction. Consider, first, the witness of St. John; try it by ordinary rules. Hearsay evidence, which comes second-hand, is suspicious; but John's is no distant, hearsay story. He does not say that he had heard the story from Thomas, and that years afterwards, when the circumstances had lost their exact, sharp outline, he had penned it down, when he was growing old, and his memory might be failing. John was present the whole time. All the apostles were there; they all watched the result with eager interest. The conditions made by Thomas, without which he would not believe, had been made before them all. They all heard him say that the demonstration was complete; they all saw him touch the wounds; and St. John recorded what he saw. Now, a scene like that is one of those solemn ones in a man's life which cannot be forgotten; it graves itself on the memory. A story told us by another may be unintentionally altered or exaggerated in the repetition; but a spectacle like this, so strange and so solemn, could not be forgotten or misinterpreted. St. John could have made no mistake. Estimate next the worth of the witness of Thomas; try it by the ordinary rules of life. Evidence is worth little if it is the evidence of credulity. If you find a man believing every new story, and accepting every fresh discovery, so called, without scrutiny, you may give him

credit for sincerity; you cannot rest much upon his judgment; his testimony cannot go for much. For example, when St. Peter, after his escape from prison, knocked at Mark's mother's door, there went a maid to open it, who came back scared and startled with the tidings that she had seen his angel or spirit. Had she gone about afterwards among the believers with that tale, that St. Peter was dead and alive again, it would have been worth little. Her fears, her sex, her credulity, all robbed her testimony of its worth.

Now, the resurrection of Christ does not stand on such a footing. There was one man who dreaded the possibility of delusion, however credulous the others might be. He resolved beforehand that only one proof should be decisive. He would not be contented with seeing Christ; that might be a dream — it might be the vision of a disordered fancy. He would not be satisfied with the assurance of others. The evidence of testimony which he did reject was very strong. Ten of his most familiar friends, and certain women, gave in their separate and their united testimony; but against all that St. Thomas held out sceptically firm. They might have been deceived themselves; they might have been trifling with him. The possibilities of mistake were innumerable; the delusions of the best men about what they see are incredible. He would trust a thing so infinitely important to nothing but his own scrutinizing hand. It might be some one personating his Master. He would put his hands into real wounds, or else hold it unproved. The allegiance which was given in so enthusiastically, "My Lord, and my God," was given in after, and not before scrutiny. It was the cautious verdict of an

enlightened, suspicious, most earnest, and most honest sceptic.

Try the evidence next by character. Blemished character damages evidence. Now, the only charge that was ever heard against the Apostle John was that he loved a world which hated him. The character of the Apostle Thomas is that he was a man cautious in receiving evidence, and most rigorous in exacting satisfactory proof, but ready to act upon his convictions, when once made, even to the death. Love elevated above the common love of man, in the one, — heroic conscientiousness and a most rare integrity, in the other, — who impeaches that testimony?

Once more, — any possibility of interested motives will discredit evidence. Ask we the motive of John or Thomas for this strange tale? John's reward, — a long and solitary banishment to the mines of Patmos. The gain and the bribe which tempted Thomas, — a lonely pilgrimage to the far East, and death at the last in India. Those were strange motives to account for their persisting and glorying in the story of the resurrection to the last! Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.

The evidence to which Thomas yielded was the evidence of the senses, — touch, and sight, and hearing. Now, the feeling which arose from this touching, and feeling, and demonstration, Christ pronounced to be faith: "Thomas, because thou hast seen thou hast believed." There are some Christian writers who tell us that the conviction produced by the intellect or the senses is not faith; but Christ says it is. Observe, then, it matters not *how* faith comes, — whether through the intellect, as in the case of St. Thomas, or

in the heart, as in the case of St. John, or as the result of long education, as in the case of St. Peter. God has many ways of bringing different characters to faith; but that blessed thing which the Bible calls faith is a *state* of soul in which the things of God become glorious certainties. It was not faith which assured Thomas that what stood before him was the Christ he had known: that was sight. But it was faith which from the visible enabled him to pierce up to the truth invisible: "My Lord, and my God." And it was faith which enabled him, through all life after, to venture everything on that conviction, and live for One who had died for him.

Remark again this: The faith of Thomas was not merely satisfaction about a fact; it was trust in a Person. The admission of a fact, however sublime, is not faith; we may believe that Christ is risen, yet not be nearer heaven. It is a Bible fact that Lazarus rose from the grave: but belief in Lazarus' resurrection does not make the soul better than it was. Thomas passed on from the fact of the resurrection to the Person of the risen: "My Lord, and my God." Trust in the risen Saviour—that was the belief which saved his soul.

And that is our salvation too. You may satisfy yourself about the evidences of the resurrection; you may bring in your verdict well, like a cautious and enlightened judge: you are then in possession of a fact, a most valuable and curious fact; but faith of any saving worth you have not, unless from the fact you pass on, like Thomas, to cast the allegiance and the homage of your soul, and the love of all your being, on Him whom Thomas worshipped. It is not belief

about the Christ, but personal trust *in* the Christ of God, that saves the soul.

There is another kind of evidence by which the Resurrection becomes certain. Not the evidence of the senses, but the evidence of the spirit: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." There are thousands of Christians, who have never examined the evidences of the resurrection piece by piece; they are incapable of estimating it, if they did examine; they know nothing about the laws of evidence; they have had no experience in balancing the value of testimony; they are neither lawyers nor philosophers; and yet these simple Christians have received into their very souls the Resurrection of their Redeemer, and look forward to their own rising from the grave with a trust as firm, as steady, and as saving, as if they had themselves put their hands into His wounds.

They have never seen, they know nothing of proofs and miracles, yet they believe and are blessed. How is this?

I reply, there is an inward state of heart which makes truth credible the moment it is stated. It is credible to some men because of what they are. Love is credible to a loving heart; purity is credible to a pure mind; life is credible to a spirit in which life ever beats strongly: it is incredible to other men. Because of that, such men believe. Of course, that inward state could not *reveal* a fact like the resurrection; but it can receive the fact the moment it is revealed, without requiring evidence. The love of St. John himself never could discover a resurrection; but it made a resurrection easily believed, when the man of intellect, St.

Thomas, found difficulties. Therefore "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," and therefore "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself," and therefore "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." Now, it is of such a state—a state of love and hope, which makes the Divine truth credible and natural at once—that Jesus speaks: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

There are men in whom the resurrection *begun* makes the resurrection credible. In them the spirit of the risen Saviour works already; and they have mounted with Him from the grave. They have risen out of the darkness of doubt, and are expatiating in the brightness and the sunshine of a Day in which God is ever Light. Their step is as free as if the clay of the sepulchre had been shaken off, and their hearts are lighter than those of other men, and there is in them an unearthly triumph which they are unable to express. They have risen above the narrowness of life, and all that is petty, and ungenerous, and mean. They have risen above fear,—they have risen above self. In the New Testament that is called the spiritual resurrection, or being risen with Christ; and the man in whom all that is working has got something more blessed than external evidence to rest upon. He has the witness in himself; he has not seen, and yet he has believed; he believed in a resurrection, because he has the resurrection in himself. The resurrection, in all its heavenliness and unearthly elevation, has begun within his soul; and he knows, as clearly as if he had demonstration, that it must be developed in an eternal life.

Now, this is the higher and nobler kind of faith,—

a faith more blessed than that of Thomas. "Because thou hast seen Me, *thou* hast believed." There are times when we envy, as possessed of higher privileges, those who saw Christ in the flesh; we think that if we could have heard that calm voice, or seen that blessed presence, or touched those lacerated wounds in His sacred flesh, all doubt would be set at rest forever. Therefore, these words must be our corrective. God has granted us the possibility of believing in a more trustful and more generous way than if we *saw*. To believe, not because we are learned and can prove, but because there is a something in us, even God's own Spirit, which makes us feel light as light, and truth as true, — that is the blessed faith.

Blessed, because it carries with it spiritual elevation of character. Narrow the prospects of man to this time-world, and it is impossible to escape the conclusions of the Epicurean sensualist. If to-morrow we die, let us eat and drink to-day. If we die the sinner's death, it becomes a matter of mere taste whether we shall live the sinner's life or not. But, if our existence is forever, then, plainly, that which is to be daily subdued and subordinated is the animal within us; that which is to be cherished is that which is likest God within us, — which we have from Him, and which is the sole pledge of eternal being in spirit-life.

XXII.

[Preached May 8, 1853.]

THE IRREPARABLE PAST.

MARK xiv. 41, 42.—"And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest; it is enough, the hour is come; behold the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand."

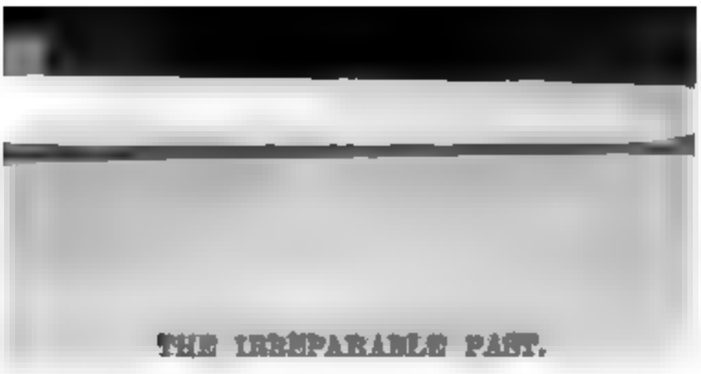
IT is upon two sentences of this passage that our attention is to be fixed to-day,—sentences which in themselves are apparently contradictory, but which are pregnant with a lesson of the deepest practical import. Looked at in the mere meaning of the words as they stand, our Lord's first command, given to His disciples, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," is inconsistent with the second command, which follows almost in the same breath, "Rise, let us be going." A permission to slumber, and a warning to arouse at once, are injunctions which can scarcely stand together in the same sentence consistently.

Our first inquiry therefore is, what did our Redeemer mean? We shall arrive at the true solution of this difficulty if we review the circumstances under which these words were spoken. The account with which these verses stand connected belongs to one of the last scenes in the drama of our Master's earthly pilgrimage; it is found in the history of the trial-hour

was passed in the garden of Gethsemane
ur it was indeed big with the destinies
rld, for the command had gone forth to s
viour's person; but the Saviour was still a
and free. Upon the success or the frustration
the world's fate was trembling. Three m
ected to be witnesses of the sufferings of that
ee men, the favored ones on all occasions
stolic band,—and the single injunction wh
n laid upon them was, "Watch with me one
harge to watch or keep awake seems
given with two ends in view. He aske
w keep awake, first that they might sympath
Him. He commanded them to keep awake, th
might be on their guard against surprise; th
might afford sympathy, because never in all Hi
did Christ more stand in need of such soothi
was in the power of man to give. It is true
not much; the struggle, and the agony, and t
ing up of the mind to death, had something
too Divine and too mysterious to be understoo
disciples, and therefore sympathy could but
portion of what our Redeemer felt. Yet sti
pears to have been an additional pang in
anguish to find that He was left thoroughly a
endure, while even His own friends did not
sionate His endurance. We know what a rel
to see the honest, affectionate face of a menial
or some poor dependant, regretting that your
may be infinitely above his comprehension.
be a secret which you cannot impart to hi
may be a mental distress which his mind is to
cated to appreciate; yet still his sympathy

dark hour is worth a world. What you suffer he knows not; but he knows you do suffer, and it pains him to think of it; there is balm to you in that. This is the power of sympathy. We can do little for one another in this world. Little, very little, can be done when the worst must come; but yet, to know that the pulses of a human heart are vibrating with yours, there is something in that, let the distance between man and man be ever so immeasurable, exquisitely soothing. It was this, and but this, in the way of feeling, that Christ asked of Peter, James, and John. Watch — be awake; let Me not feel that when I agonize, you can be at ease and comfortable. [illegible] seem there was another thing wh[illegible] way of assistance. The plot to [illegible]; the chance of that plot's success [illegible] surprise so sudden as to cut [illegible] escape. The hope of defeating [illegible] upon the fidelity of apostolic [illegible] speaking, had they been [illegible] saved Him. Breathless [illegible] footsteps in the distance [illegible] through the trees to [illegible] lanterns; unremitting [illegible] word of Christ an [illegible] and so giving notice [illegible] like intrusion, — that [illegible]

That command t[illegible] when Christ first [illegible] by themselves; [illegible] He returned and [illegible] waked them up [illegible] watch with Me [illegible]



heir eyes closed once more. On that o
syllable fell from His lips; He did not
a second time. He passed away, sad an
ted, and left them to their slumbers. Bu
ame the third time, it was no longer poss
r sleep to do Him harm, or their watchin
good. The precious opportunity was l
Sympathy — vigilance — the hour for th
The priests had succeeded in their surpr
as had well led them through the dark wit
accuracy, to the very spot where his
; and there were seen quite close, th
es shown in relief against the glare of
torchlight, and every now and then the gleam
ing from the bared steel and the Roman arm
was all over; they might sleep as they liked
sleeping could do no injury now, their w
could do no good. And therefore, partly in bit
partly in reproach, partly in a kind of earnest
partly in sad earnest, our Master said to His di
Sleep on now; there is no use in watching now
your rest — forever if you will. Sleep and r
do Me no more harm now, for all that watchin
have done is lost.

But, brethren, we have to observe that in th
sentence our Redeemer addresses Himself to t
sideration of what could yet be done; the bes
as circumstances then stood. So far as any g
be got from watching went, they might sle
there was no reparation for the fault that na
done; but so far as duty went, there was still
of endurance to which they had to rouse them
They could not save their Master, but they

loyally and manfully share His disgrace, and, if it must be, His death. They could not put off the penalty, but they might steel themselves cheerfully to share it. Safety was out of the question now; but they might meet their fate, instead of being overwhelmed by it; and so, as respected what was gone by, Christ said, "Sleep," what is done cannot be undone; but as respected the duties that were lying before them still, He said, We must make the best of it that can be made: rouse yourselves to dare the worst; on to enact your parts like men. Rise, let us be going,—we have something still left to do. Here then we have two subjects of contemplation distinctly marked out for us.

I. The irreparable Past.

II. The available Future.

The words of Christ are not like the words of other men; His sentences do not end with the occasion which called them forth; every sentence of Christ's is a deep principle of human life, and it is so with these sentences. "Sleep on now," — that is a principle. "Rise up, and let us be going," — that is another principle. The principle contained in "Sleep on now" is this, that the past is irreparable, and after a certain moment waking will do no good. You may improve the future — the past is gone beyond recovery. As to all that is gone by, so far as the hope of altering it goes, you may sleep on and take your rest; there is no power in earth or heaven that can undo what has once been done.

Now, let us proceed to give illustrations of this principle.

It is true, first of all, with respect to *time* gone by. Time is the solemn inheritance to every man is born heir, who has a life-rent world, — a little section cut out of eternity and us to do our work in; an eternity before, an e behind; and the small stream between, floating from the one into the vast bosom of the other man who has felt with all his soul the significa time will not be long in learning any lesson th world has to teach him. Have you ever felt Christian brethren? Have you ever realize your own little streamlet is gliding away, and b you along with it towards that awful other wo which all things here are but the thin shadows, into that eternity towards which the confused of all earthly things is bound? Let us realiz beloved brethren: until that sensation of tim the infinite meaning which is wrapped up in taken possession of our souls, there is no cha our ever feeling strongly that it is worse than m to sleep that time away. Every day in this wor its work; and every day, as it rises out of et keeps putting to each of us the question afresh, will you do before to-day has sunk into eternit nothingness again? And now what have we t with respect to this strange, solemn thing — That men do with it through life just what the tles did for one precious and irreparable hour of the garden of Gethsemane; they go to sleep. you ever seen those marble statues in some square or garden, which art has so finished into rennial fountain that through the lips, or throug hands, the clear water flows in a perpetual strea

on and on forever; and the marble stands there — passive, cold — making no effort to arrest the gliding water?

It is so that time flows through the hands of men, — swift, never pausing till it has run itself out; and there is the man petrified into a marble sleep, not feeling what it is which is passing away forever. It is so, brethren, just so, that the destiny of nine men out of ten accomplishes itself, slipping away from them, aimless, useless, till it is too late. And this passage asks us, with all the solemn thoughts which crowd around an approaching eternity, what has been our life, and what do we intend it shall be? Yesterday, last week, last year, — they are gone. Yesterday, for example, was such a day as never was before, and never can be again. Out of darkness and eternity it was born, a new, fresh day; into darkness and eternity it sank again forever. It had a voice calling to us, of its own. Its own work, its own duties. What were we doing yesterday? Idling, whiling away the time in light and luxurious literature, - not as life's relaxation, but as life's business? thrilling our hearts with the excitement of life? contriving how to spend the day most pleasantly? Was that our day? Sleep, brethren! all that is but the sleep of the three apostles. And now let us remember this: there is a day coming when that sleep will be broken rudely, with a shock; there is a day in our future lives when our time will be counted, not by years, nor by months, nor yet by hours, but by minutes, — the day when unmistakable symptoms shall announce that the Messengers of Death have come to take us.

That startling moment will come which it is vain to

attempt to realize now, when it will be felt th
all over, at last, — that our chance and our t
past. The moment that we have tried to th
shrunk from, put away from us, here it is — goi
like all other moments that have gone before
then, with eyes unsealed at last, you look back
life which is gone by. There is no mistake a
there it is, a sleep, a most palpable sleep
indulged unconsciousness of high destinies, a
and Christ; a sleep when Christ was calling
you to watch with Him one hour; a sleep whe
was something to be done; a sleep broken, it
once or twice by restless dreams, and by a v
truth which would make itself heard at times,
a sleep which was only rocked into deeper still
interruption. And now, from the undone e
the boom of whose waves is distinctly audib
your soul, there comes the same voice again
emn, sad voice — but no longer the same
"Watch;" — other words altogether, "You ma
sleep." It is too late to wake; there is no sc
earth or heaven to recall time that once has fle

Again, this principle of the irreparable pas
good with respect to preparing for temptation
hour in the garden was a precious opportunit
for laying in spiritual strength. Christ knew
He struggled and fought *then;* therefore there
struggling afterwards, — no trembling in the ju
hall, — no shrinking on the cross, but only d
and calm victory; for He had fought the Ten
on His knees beforehand, and conquered all
garden. The battle of the Judgment-hall, the
of the Cross, were already fought and over,

Watch, and in the Agony. The apostles missed the meaning of that hour; and therefore, when it came to the question of trial, the loudest boaster of them all shrunk from acknowledging Whose he was, and the rest played the part of the craven and the renegade. And, if the reason of this be asked, it is simply this: They went to trial unprepared; they had not prayed; and what is a Christian without prayer, but Samson without his talisman of hair.

Brethren, in this world, when there is any foreseen or suspected danger before us, it is our duty to forecast our trial. It is our wisdom to put on our armor — to consider what lies before us — to call up resolution in God's strength to go through what we may have to do. And it is marvellous how difficulties smooth away before a Christian when he does this. Trials that cost him a struggle to meet even in imagination — like the heavy sweat of Gethsemane, when Christ was looking forward and feeling exceeding sorrowful even unto death — come to their crisis; and, behold, to his astonishment they are nothing, — they have been fought and conquered already. But, if you go to meet those temptations, not as Christ did, but as the apostles did, prayerless, trusting to the chance impulse of the moment, you may make up your mind to fail. That opportunity lost is irreparable; it is your doom to yield then. Those words are true, you may "sleep on now, and take your rest," for you have betrayed yourself into the hands of danger.

And now one word about prayer. It is a preparation for danger, it is the armor for battle. Go not, my Christian brother, into the dangerous world without it. You kneel down at night to pray, and drowsiness

weighs down your eyelids. A hard day's wo kind of excuse, and you shorten your pray resign yourself softly to repose. The morning and it may be you rise late, and so your earl tions are not done, or done with irregular hast watching unto prayer, — wakefulness once mor ted. And now we ask, is that reparable? Bı we solemnly believe not. There has been tha which cannot be undone. You have given u prayer, and you will suffer for it. Temptation is you, and you are not fit to meet it. There is a feeling on the soul, and you linger at a distanc Christ. It is no marvel if that day in which y fered drowsiness to interfere with prayer be a which you betray Him by cowardice and soft ing from duty. Let it be a principle throug moments of prayer intruded upon by sloth can made up. We may get experience, but we can back the rich freshness and strength whicl wrapped up in these moments.

Once again this principle is true in another r Opportunities of doing good do not come bacl are here, brethren, for a most definite and into purpose, — to educate our own hearts by de love, and to be the instruments of blessing brother-men. There are two ways in which th be done, — by guarding them from danger, a soothing them in their rough path by kindly s thies, — the two things which the apostles were to do for Christ. And it is an encouraging th that he who cannot do the one has at least the in his power. If he cannot protect, he can s thize. Let the weakest, let the humblest i

congregation, remember that in his daily course he can, if he will, shed around him almost a heaven. Kindly words, sympathizing attentions, watchfulness against wounding men's sensitiveness, — these cost very little, but they are priceless in their value. Are they not, brethren, almost the staple of our daily happiness? From hour to hour, from moment to moment, we are supported, blest, by small kindnesses. And then consider: — Here is a section of life one-third, one-half, it may be three-fourths, gone by, and the question before us is how much has been done in that way? Who has charged himself with the guardianship of his brother's safety? Who has laid on himself as a sacred duty to sit beside his brother suffering? O, my brethren, it is the omission of these things which is irreparable! Irreparable, when you look to the purest enjoyment which might have been your own; irreparable, when you consider the compunction which belongs to deeds of love not done; irreparable, when you look to this groaning world, and feel that its agony of bloody sweat has been distilling all night, and you were dreaming away in luxury! Shame, shame upon our selfishness! There is an infinite voice in the sin and sufferings of earth's millions, which makes every idle moment — every moment, that is, which is not relaxation — guilt; and seems to cry out, If you will not bestir yourself for love's sake *now*, it will soon be too late.

Lastly, this principle applies to a misspent youth. There is something very remarkable in the picture which is placed before us. There is a picture of *One* struggling, toiling, standing between others and danger, and those others quietly content to reap the ben

eft of that struggle without anxiety of their own
there is something in this singularly like the posit
which all young persons are placed. The youn
by God's Providence, exempted in a great me
from anxiety; they are as the apostles were in re
to their Master; their friends stand between the
the struggle of existence. They are not called
to think for themselves; the burden is borne by o
They get their bread without knowing or caring
it is paid for; they smile and laugh without a sus
of the anxious thoughts of day and night wh
parent bears to enable them to smile. So to
they are sleeping, — and it is not a guilty sle
while another watches.

My young brethren, youth is one of the pr
opportunities of life, rich in blessing if you cho
make it so, but having in it the materials of un
remorse if you suffer it to pass unimproved.
quiet Gethsemane is now. Gethsemane's str
you cannot know yet. Take care that you d
learn too well Gethsemane's sleep. Do you kno
you can imitate the apostles in their fatal sleep?
can suffer your young days to pass idly and use
away; you can live as if you had nothing to do
enjoy yourselves; you can let others think fo
and not try to become thoughtful yourselves, t
business and the difficulties of life come upo
unprepared, and you find yourselves, like men w
from sleep, hurried, confused, scarcely able to
with all the faculties bewildered, not knowing
from wrong, led headlong to evil, just because
have not given yourselves in time to learn w
good. All that is sleep. And now, let us ma

You cannot repair that in after-life. O! remember every period of human life has its own lesson, and you cannot learn that lesson in the next period. The boy has one set of lessons to learn, and the young man another, and the grown-up man another. Let us consider one single instance. The boy has to learn docility, gentleness of temper, reverence, submission. All those feelings which are to be transferred afterwards in full cultivation to God, like plants nursed in a hot-bed and then planted out, are to be cultivated first in youth. Afterwards, those habits which have been merely habits of obedience to an earthly parent are to become religious submission to a Heavenly Parent. Our parents stand to us in the place of God. Veneration for our parents is intended to become afterwards adoration for something higher. Take that single instance; and now suppose that *that* is not learnt in boyhood. Suppose that the boy sleeps to that duty of veneration, and learns only flippancy, insubordination, and the habit of deceiving his father,—can that, my young brethren, be repaired afterwards? Humanly speaking, not. Life is like the transition from class to class in a school. The schoolboy who has not learnt arithmetic in the earlier classes cannot secure it when he comes to mechanics in the higher, each section has its own sufficient work. He may be a good philosopher or a good historian, but a bad arithmetician he remains for life; for he cannot lay the foundation at the moment when he must be building the superstructure. The regiment which has not perfected itself in its manœuvres on the parade-ground cannot learn them before the guns of the enemy. And, just in the same way, the young person who has

slept his youth away, and become idle and selfis
hard, cannot make up for that afterwards. He m
something; he may be religious. Yes; but he c
be what he might have been. There is a part
heart which will remain uncultivated to the end.
apostles could share their Master's sufferings;
could not save Him. Youth has its irreparable

And, therefore, my young brethren, let it b
pressed upon you — NOW is a time, infinite in its
for eternity, which will never return again.
not; learn that there is a very solemn work of
which must be done while the stillness of the g
of your Gethsemane gives you time. Now — or

The treasures at your command are infinite —
ures of time, treasures of youth, treasures of
tunity, that grown-up men would sacrifice every
they have to possess. O, for ten years of youth
again, with the added experience of age! But i
not be; they must be content to sleep on now
take their rest.

We are to pass on next to a few remarks o
other sentence in this passage, which brings befo
for consideration, the future, which is still avail
for we are to observe that our Master did not
his apostles to a regretful recollection of their fa
Recollection of it He did demand. There were
materials of a most cutting self-reproach in the
words He said; for they contained all the desol
of that sad word *never*. Who knows not what
word wraps up — Never — it *never* can be und
Sleep on. But yet there was no sickly lingering
the irreparable. Our Master's words are the w
of one who had fully recognized the h polessnes

nis position, but yet manfully and calmly had numbered his resources, and scanned his duties, and then braced up his mind to meet the exigences of his situation with no passive endurance; the moment was come for action: "Rise, let us be going."

Now, the broad general lesson which we gain from this is not hard to read. It is that a Christian is to be forever rousing himself to recognize the duties which lie before him *now*. In Christ the motto is ever this: "Let us be going." Let me speak to the conscience of some one. Perhaps yours is a very remorseful past, — a foolish, frivolous, disgraceful, frittered past. Well, Christ says, My servant, be sad, but no languor; there is work to be done for me yet. Rise up, be going! O, my brethren, Christ takes your wretched remnants of life, the feeble pulses of a heart which has spent its best hours, not for Him, but for self and for enjoyment, and, in His strange love, He condescends to accept them.

Let me speak to another kind of experience. Perhaps we feel that we have faculties which never have and now never will find their right field; perhaps we are ignorant of many things which cannot be learnt now; perhaps the seed-time of life has gone by, and certain powers of heart and mind will not grow now; perhaps you feel that the best days of life are gone, and it is too late to begin things which were in your power once. Still, my repentant brother, there is encouragement from your Master yet. Wake to the opportunities that yet remain. Ten years of life — five years — one year — say you have only that, — Will you sleep that away because you have already slept too long? Eternity is crying out to you louder

and louder, as you near its brink, Rise, be g
count your resources; learn what you are not f
and give up wishing for it; learn what you ca
and do it with the energy of a man. That is the
lesson of this passage. But now consider it a
more closely.

Christ impressed two things on His apostles' r
1. The duty of Christian earnestness — "Rise
The duty of Christian energy — "Let us be goin

Christ roused them to earnestness when He
"Rise." A short, sharp, rousing call. They we
start up and wake to the realities of their po
The guards were on them; their Master was
to be led away to doom. That was an awak
which would make men spring to their feet in ea
Brethren, goodness and earnestness are nearl
same thing. In the language in which this Bibl
written there was one word which expressed
both; what we translate a good man, in Gre
literally "earnest." The Greeks felt that to be e
was nearly identical with being good. But, hov
there is a day in life when a man must be earne
it does not follow that he will be good. "Behc
bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." T
a sound that will thunder through the most fast-l
slumber, and rouse men whom sermons cannot
But that will not make them holy. Earnestn
life, brethren, that is goodness. Wake in deat
must, for it is an earnest thing to die. Shall it b
I pray you? Shall it be the voice of death whic
says, "Arise," at the very moment when it says, "
on forever"? Shall it be the bridal train swe
by, and the shutting of the doors, and the disc

that the lamp is gone out? Shall *that* be the first time you know that it is an earnest thing to live? Let us feel that we have been *doing;* learn what time is — sliding from you, and not stopping when you stop; learn what sin is; learn what "*never*" is: "Awake, thou that sleepest."

Lastly, Christian energy — "Let us be going." There were two ways open to Christ in which to submit to His doom. He might have waited for it; instead of which, He went to meet the soldiers. He took up the Cross. The cup of anguish was not forced between his lips; He took it with His own hands, and drained it quickly to the last drop. In after-years the disciples understood the lesson, and acted on it. They did not wait till Persecution overtook them: they braved the Sanhedrim; they fronted the world; they proclaimed aloud the unpopular and unpalatable doctrines of the Resurrection and the Cross. Now, in this there lies a principle. Under no conceivable set of circumstances are we justified in sitting

—— "By the poisoned springs of life,
Waiting for the morrow which shall free us from the strife."

Under no circumstances, whether of pain, or grief, or disappointment, or irreparable mistake, can it be true that there is not something to be done, as well as something to be suffered. And thus it is that the spirit of Christianity draws over our life, not a leaden cloud of Remorse and Despondency, but a sky — not, perhaps, of radiant, but yet of most serene and chastened and manly hope. There is a Past which is gone forever. But there is a Future which is still our own.

THIRD SERIES.

SERMONS.

I.

[Preached April 28, 1850.]

THE TONGUE.

St. James iii 5, 6. — "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell."

In the development of Christian Truth, a peculiar office was assigned to the Apostle James.

It was given to St. Paul to proclaim Christianity as the spiritual law of liberty, and to exhibit Faith as the most active principle within the breast of man. It was St. John's to say that the deepest quality in the bosom of Deity is Love, and to assert that the life of God in Man is Love. It was the office of St. James to assert the necessity of Moral Rectitude. His very name marked him out peculiarly for this office; he was emphatically called "the Just." Integrity was his peculiar characteristic — a man singularly honest, earnest, real. Accordingly, if you read through his whole epistle, you will find it is, from

to last, one continual vindication of t
ples of morality against the *semblance*
s.

protested against the censoriousness
found connected with peculiar claims of r
gs. "If any man among you seem to
us and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiv
a heart, this man's religion is vain." He pr
ainst that spirit which had crept into the C
otherhood, truckling to the rich, and despis
poor. "If ye have respect of persons ye com
and are convinced of the law as transgressor
protested against that sentimental fatalism w
duced men to throw the blame of their own p
upon God. "Let no man say, when he is ten
am tempted of God; for God cannot tempt t
neither tempteth He any man." He protested
that unreal religion of excitement which dilu
earnestness of real religion in the enjoyment of
ing. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearer
deceiving your own souls." He protested agai
trust in the correctness of theological doctrine
neglected the cultivation of character. "Wha
it profit, if a man *say* that he hath faith, and ha
works? Can faith save him?"

Read St. James' epistle through; this is the
breathing through it all; — all this *talk* about re
and spirituality — words, words, words — nay,
have *realities*.

It is well known that Luther complained o
epistle, that it did not contain the Gospel; fo
who are hampered by a system will say, even
inspired Apostle, that he does not teach the G

if their own favorite doctrine be not the central subject of his discourse; but St. James' reply seems spontaneously to suggest itself to us. The Gospel! how can we speak of the Gospel, when the first principles of morality are forgotten? when Christians are excusing themselves and slandering one another? How can the superstructure of Love and Faith be built, when the very foundations of human character — Justice, Mercy, Truth — have not been laid?

I. The license of the tongue.

II. The guilt of that license.

I. The first license given to the tongue is slander. I am not, of course, speaking now of that species of slander against which the law of libel provides a remedy, but of that of which the Gospel alone takes cognizance; for the worst injuries which man can do to man are precisely those which are too delicate for *law* to deal with. We consider, therefore, not the calumny which is reckoned such by the moralities of an earthly court, but that which is found guilty by the spiritualities of the courts of heaven; that is, the mind of God.

Now, observe, this slander is compared in the text to poison — "the tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." The deadliest poisons are those for which no test is known; there are poisons so destructive that a single drop insinuated into the veins produces death in three seconds, and yet no chemical science can separate that virus from the contaminated blood, and show the metallic particles of poison glittering palpably, and say, 'Behold, it is there!"

In the drop of venom which distils from the sting

of the smallest insect, or the spikes of the net there is concentrated the quintessence of a poi subtle that the microscope cannot distinguish yet so virulent that it can inflame the blood, the whole constitution, and convert day and nig restless misery.

In St. James' day, as now, it would appe there were idle men and idle women, who went from house to house, dropping slander as the and yet you could not take up that slander and the falsehood there. You could not evapor truth in the slow process of the crucible, ar show the residuum of falsehood glittering and You could not fasten upon any word or senter say that it was calumny; for, in order to co slander, it is not necessary that the word spoker be false — half truths are often more calu than whole falsehoods. It is not even necessa a word should be distinctly uttered; a drop] an arched eyebrow, a shrugged shoulder, a sig look, an incredulous expression of countenan even an emphatic silence, may do the work; an the light and trifling thing which has done t chief has fluttered off, the venom is left bel work and rankle, to inflame hearts, to fever hu istence, and to poison human society at the f springs of life. Very emphatically was it said whose whole being had smarted under such af "Adder's poison is under their lips."

The second license given to the tongue is in t of persecution: "Therewith curse we men wh made after the similitude of God." "We!" who bear the name of Christ — curse our br

Christians persecuted Christians. Thus even in St. James' age that spirit had begun, the monstrous fact of Christian persecution; from that day it has continued, through long centuries, up to the present time. The Church of Christ assumed the office of denunciation, and except in the first council, whose object was not to strain, but to relax the bonds of brotherhood, not a council has met for eighteen centuries which has not guarded each profession of belief by the too customary formula, "If any man maintain otherwise than this, let him be accursed."

Myriad, countless curses have echoed through those long ages; the Church has forgotten her Master's spirit, and called down fire from heaven. A fearful thought to consider this as the spectacle on which the eye of God has rested. He looks down upon the creatures He has made, and hears everywhere the language of religious imprecations; and, after all, who is proved right by curses?

The Church of Rome hurls her thunders against Protestants of every denomination; the Calvinist scarcely recognizes the Arminian as a Christian; he who considers himself as the true Anglican excludes from the Church of Christ all but the adherents of his own orthodoxy; every minister and congregation has its small circle, beyond which all are heretics; nay, even among that sect which is most lax as to the dogmatic forms of truth, we find the Unitarian of the old school denouncing the spiritualism of the new and rising school.

This is the state of things to which we are arrived. Sisters of Charity refuse to permit an act of charity to be done by a Samaritan; ministers of the Gospel

fling the thunderbolts of the Lord; ignorant
catch and exaggerate the spirit; boys, gi
women, shudder as one goes by, perhaps mo
than themselves, who adores the same God,
in the same Redeemer, struggles in the same lif
—and all this because they have been taught
upon him as an enemy of God.

There is a class of religious persons again
this vehemence has been especially directed.
who can read the signs of the times can help
ing that we are on the eve of great change
haps a disruption of the Church of England.
tionably there has been a large secession to the
of Rome.

Now, what has been the position of those
about to take this step? They have been
with dishonest reception of the wages of the
a watch has been set over them; not a wo
uttered in private or in public, but was give
world by some religious busybody; there wa
visit which they paid, not a foolish dress whi
adopted, but became the subject of bitter scru
malevolent gossip. For years the religious p
denounced them with a vehemence as virul
happily, more impotent than that of the Inq
There has been an anguish and an inward s
little suspected, endured by men who felt the
outcasts in their own society, and naturally loo
a home elsewhere.

We congratulate ourselves that the days of
tion are gone by; but persecution is that whic
penalties upon *views held*, instead of upon *life*
persecution *only* fire and sword? But suppos

of sensitive feeling says, The sword is less sharp to me than the slander: fire is less intolerable than the refusal of sympathy!

Now, let us bring this home: you rejoice that the fagot and the stake are given up; *you* never persecuted — you leave that to the wicked Church of Rome. Yes, you never burned a human being alive; you never clapped your hands as the death-shriek proclaimed that the lion's fang had gone home into the most vital part of the victim's frame; but did you never rob him of his friends? gravely shake your head, and oracularly insinuate that he was leading souls to hell? chill the affections of his family? take from him his good name? Did you never, with delight, see his Church placarded as the Man of Sin, and hear the platform denunciations which branded it with the spiritual abominations of the Apocalypse? Did you never find a malicious pleasure in repeating all the miserable gossip with which religious slander fastened upon his daily acts, his words, and even his uncommunicated thoughts? Did you never forget that, for a man to "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling," is a matter difficult enough to be laid upon a human spirit, without intruding into the most sacred department of another's life, — that, namely, which lies between himself and God? Did you never say that "it was to be wished he should go to Rome," until at last life became intolerable, — until he was thrown more and more in upon himself; found himself, like his Redeemer, in this world alone, but unable, like his Redeemer, calmly to repose upon the thought that his Father was with him, then a stern, defiant spirit took possession of his soul, and there burst from his lips, or

heart, the wish for *rest*,— rest at any cost, peac where, — if, even, it is to be found only in the of the Church of Rome!

II. The guilt of this license.

1. The first evil consequence is the harm that does himself: "So is the tongue among the me that it defiles the whole body." It is not very o in what way a man does himself harm by calum will take the simplest form in which this inj done: it effects a dissipation of spiritual e There are two ways in which the steam of mac may find an outlet for its force: it may work; a so, it works silently; or, it may escape, and that place loudly, in air and noise. There are two w which the spiritual energy of a man's soul may fi vent: it may express itself in action silently, words noisily; but just so much of force as is t into the one mode of expression is taken fro other.

Few men suspect how much mere talk fritters spiritual energy, — that which should be spe action spends itself in words. The fluent boas not the man who is steadiest before the enemy; well said to him that his courage is better kept is wanted. Loud utterances of virtuous indig against evil from the platform, or in the drawing- do not characterize the spiritual giant: so much nation as is expressed has found vent, is wasted taken away from the work of coping with evil,- man has so much less left. And hence he restrains that love of talk lays up a fund of spi strength.

With large significance, St. James declares, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." He is entire, powerful, because he has not spent his strength. In these days of loud profession, and bitter, fluent condemnation, it is well for us to learn the divine force of silence. Remember Christ in the Judgment-hall, the very Symbol and Incarnation of spiritual strength; and yet, when revilings were loud around Him, and charges multiplied, "He held His peace."

2. The next feature in the guilt of calumny is its uncontrollable character: "The tongue can no man tame." You cannot arrest a calumnious tongue, you cannot arrest the calumny itself; you may refute a slanderer, you may trace home a slander to its source, you may expose the author of it, you may by that exposure give a lesson so severe as to make the repetition of the offence appear impossible; but the fatal habit is incorrigible; to-morrow the tongue is at work again.

Neither can you stop the consequences of a slander; you may publicly prove its falsehood, you may sift every atom, explain, and annihilate it, and yet, years after you had thought that all had been disposed of forever, the mention of a name wakes up associations in the mind of some one who heard the calumny, but never heard or never attended to the refutation, or who has only a vague and confused recollection of the whole, and he asks the question, doubtfully, "But were there not some suspicious circumstances connected with him?" It is like the Greek fire used in ancient warfare, which burnt unquenched beneath the water: or like the weeds, which, when you have

extirpated them in one place, are sprouting fe
orously in another spot, at the distance of ma
dred yards; or, to use the metaphor of St
himself, it is like the wheel which catches fi
goes, and burns with a fiercer conflagration as
speed increases; "it sets on fire the whole co
nature" (literally, the wheel of nature). Y
tame the wild beast, the conflagration of the A
forest will cease when all the timber and the
derwood is consumed; but you cannot arrest th
ress of that cruel word which you uttered ea
yesterday or this morning, — which you wil
perhaps, before you have passed from this chu
hundred yards; that will go on slaying, po
burning, beyond your own control, now and fo

3. The third element of guilt lies in the un
ness of calumny. "My brethren, these things
not so to be;" *ought not* — that is, they are un
That this is St. James' meaning is evident fr
second illustration which follows: "Doth a f
send forth at the same place sweet water and b
"Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berri
vine figs?"

There is apparently in these metaphors litt
affords an argument against slander; the motive
they suggest would appear to many far-fetched,
small cogency; but to one who looks on this w
a vast whole, and who has recognized the mo
as only a part of the great law of the univers
moniously blending with the whole, illustration
as these are the most powerful of all arguments
truest definition of evil is that which represen
something contrary to nature; evil is evil bec

is unnatural: a vine which should bear olive-berries, an eye to which blue seems yellow, would be diseased; an unnatural mother, an unnatural son, an unnatural act, are the strongest terms of condemnation. It is this view which Christianity gives of moral evil; the teaching of Christ was the recall of man to nature, not an infusion of something new into humanity. Christ came to call out all the principles and powers of human nature, to restore the natural equilibrium of all our faculties; not to call us back to our own individual selfish nature, but to human nature as it is in God's ideal, — the perfect type which is to be realized in us. Christianity is the regeneration of our whole nature, not the destruction of one atom of it.

Now, the nature of man is to adore God, and to love what is God-like in man. The office of the tongue is to bless. Slander is guilty, because it contradicts this: yet, even in slander itself, perversion as it is, the interest of man in man is still distinguishable. What is it but perverted interest which makes the acts, and words, and thoughts, of his brethren, even in their evil, a matter of such strange delight? Remember, therefore, this contradicts your nature and your destiny: to speak ill of others makes you a monster in God's world; get the habit of slander, and then there is not a stream which babbles fresh from the heart of nature, there is not a tree that silently brings forth its genial fruit in its appointed season, which does not rebuke and proclaim you a monstrous anomaly in God's world.

4. The fourth point of guilt is the diabolical character of slander; the tongue "is set on fire of hell." Now, this is no mere strong expression — no mere in-

vituperation; it contains deep and en

ostle means literally what he says — sla
ptical. The first illustration we give of
ined in the very meaning of the word
vil," in the original, means traducer, or sla
irst introduction of a demon spirit is
cted with a slanderous insinuation agai
ty, implying that His command had been
y of His creature: "for God doth know
y ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be o
e shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.'
the magnificent imagery of the book of J
accuser is introduced with a demoniacal and mal
sneer, attributing the excellence of a good m
interested motives: "Doth Job serve God for nau
There is another mode in which the fearful acc
of St. James' charge may be demonstrated. Th
one state only from which there is said to be
covery, — there is but one sin that is called
donable. The Pharisees beheld the works of
They could not deny that they were good works
could not deny that they were miracles of benefic
but, rather than acknowledge that they were done
good man, through the coöperation of a Divine
they preferred to account for them by the wildes
most incredible hypothesis; they said they were
by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the d
It was upon this occasion that our Redeemer said,
solemn meaning, "For every idle word that men
speak, they shall give account in the day of
ment." It was then that He said, for a word sp

against the Holy Ghost there is no forgiveness in this world, or in the world to come.

Our own hearts respond to the truth of this. To call evil good, and good evil, — to see the Divinest good, and call it satanic evil, — below this lowest deep there is *not* a lower still. There is no cure for mortification of the flesh; there is no remedy for ossification of the heart. O! that miserable state, when to the jaundiced eye all good transforms itself into evil, and the very instruments of health become the poison of disease! Beware of every approach of this! Beware of that spirit which controversy fosters, of watching only for the evil in the character of an antagonist! — Beware of that habit which becomes the slanderer's life, of magnifying every speck of evil and closing the eye to goodness, till at last men arrive at the state in which generous, universal love (which is heaven) becomes impossible, and a suspicious, universal hate takes possession of the heart, — and *that* is hell!

There is one peculiar manifestation of this spirit, to which I desire specially to direct your attention.

The politics of the community are guided by the political press. The religious views of a vast number are formed by that portion of the press which is called religious; it becomes, therefore, a matter of deepest interest to inquire what is the spirit of that "religious press." I am not asking you what are the views maintained — whether Evangelical, Anglican, or Romish — but what is the *spirit* of that fountain from which the religious life of so many is nourished?

Let any man cast his eye over the pages of this portion of the press, — it matters little to which party the news-paper or the journal may belong, — he will

ıd to find the characters of those he has
anced, whose hearts he knows, and whose
ınd life are above suspicion, held up to sco
The organ of one party is established
ırgan of another, and it is the recognized o
to point out, with microscopic care, the na
whose views are to be shunned; and in
ese may be the more shrunk from, the cha
se who hold such opinions are traduced a
There is no personality too mean, there
nuation too audacious or too false, for the re
uess of those daring slanderers. I do not like
the expression, lest it should appear to be mere
of theatrical vehemence; but I say it in all s
ness, adopting the inspired language of the Bib
using it advisedly and with accurate meanin
spirit which guides the "religious press" of this
try, which dictates those personalities, which pr
controversialists from seeing what is good in
opponents, which attributes low motives to a
for excellent lives, and teaches men whom t
pect, and shun, rather than points out where it
sible to admire and love, — is a spirit "set on f
hell."

Before we conclude, let us get at the root
matter. "Man," says the Apostle James, "was
in the image of God;" to slander man is to sl
God; to love what is good in man is to love it in
Love is the only remedy for slander: no set of
or restrictions can stop it; we may denounce, b
shall denounce in vain. The radical cure of it is
ity, — "out of a pure heart and faith unfeigne
feel what is great in the human character; to r

nize with delight all high, and generous, and beautiful actions; to find a joy even in seeing the good qualities of your bitterest opponents, and to admire those qualities even in those with whom you have least sympathy — be it either the Romanist or the Unitarian — this is the only spirit which can heal the love of slander and of calumny. If we would bless God, we must *first* learn to bless man, who is made in the image of God.

II.

[Preached May 5, 1850.]

THE VICTORY OF FAITH.

1 John v. 4, 5. — "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesu Son of God?"

THERE are two words in the system of Christi which have received a meaning so new, and so phatic, as to be in a way peculiar to it, and to tinguish it from all other systems of morality religion; — these two words are — the World, Faith. We find it written in Scripture that to the friendship of the world is to be the enemy of whereupon the question arises — The world, — di God make the world? Did He not place us in world? Are we not to love what God has m And yet meeting this distinctly we have the ins record, "Love not the world."

The object of the Statesman is, or ought to b produce as much worldly prosperity as possible; Christianity, that is, Christ, speaks little of this wo prosperity, underrates it, — nay, speaks of it at t as infinitely dangerous.

The legislator prohibits crime, the moralist tr

gression, the religionist sin. To these Christianity superadds a new enemy - the world and the things of the world. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

The other word used in a peculiar sense is Faith. It is impossible for any one to have read his Bible ever so negligently, and not to be aware that the word Faith, or the grace of Faith, forms a large element in the Christian system. It is said to work miracles, remove mountains, justify the soul, trample upon impossibilities. Every apostle, in his way, assigns to faith a primary importance. Jude tells us to "build up ourselves in our most holy faith." John tells us that "he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is the born of God;" and Paul tells us that, not by merit nor by works, but by trust or reliance only, can be formed that state of soul by which man is reckoned just before God. In these expressions, the apostles only develop their Master's meaning, when He uses such words as these: "All things are possible to him that believeth." — "O, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

These two words are brought into diametrical opposition in the text, so that it branches into a two-fold line of thought.

I. The Christian's enemy, the world.

II. The victory of faith.

In endeavoring to understand first what is meant by the world, we shall feel that the mass of evil which is comprehended under this expression cannot be told out in any one sermon; it is an expression used in various ways, sometimes meaning one thing, sometimes

another; but we will endeavor to ex
principles; and these we will divide in
first, the tyranny of the present; s
tyranny of the sensual; and, lastly, the s
ty.

The tyranny of the present.

ist," says the Apostle Paul, "hath rede
this present evil world;" and, again, '
forsaken me, having loved this present wo
a stress be laid on the word *present*.
s is the attractive power of something pr
osition to something to come. It is this
nay of the present that constitutes Demas a

In this respect, worldliness is the spirit of ch
carried on into manhood. The child lives in t
ent hour — to-day to him is everything. The
promised at a distant interval is no holiday at
must be either now or never. Natural in th
and therefore pardonable, this spirit, when car
into manhood, is coarse — is worldliness. Th
distinct illustration given us of this is the c
Esau. Esau came from the hunting-field wo
hungry; the only means of procuring the to
mess of his brother's pottage was the sacrifice
father's blessing, which in those ages carried w
substantial advantage; but that birthright co
enjoyed only after *years* — the *pottage* was
near, and certain; therefore he sacrificed a futu
higher blessing, for a present and lower pleasure
this reason Esau is the Bible type of worldline
is called in Scripture a profane, that is, not a dis
vicious, but a secular or worldly person — an

grown child, impetuous, inconsistent, not without gleams of generosity and kindliness, but over accustomed to immediate gratification.

In this worldliness, moreover, is to be remarked the gamester's desperate play. There is a gambling spirit in human nature. Esau distinctly expresses this: "Behold I am at the point to die, and what shall my birthright profit me?" He might never live to enjoy his birthright; but the pottage was before him,—present, certain, *there*.

Now, observe the utter powerlessness of mere preaching to cope with this tyrannical power of the present. Forty thousand pulpits throughout the land this day will declaim against the vanity of riches, the uncertainty of life, the sin of worldliness — against the gambling spirit of human nature; I ask what *impression* will be produced by those forty thousand harangues? In every congregation it is reducible to a certainty that, before a year has passed, some will be numbered with the dead. Every man knows this, but he thinks the chances are that it will not be himself; he feels it a solemn thing for humanity generally — but for himself there is more than a chance. Upon this chance he plays away life.

It is so with the child: you tell him of the consequences of to-day's idleness — but the sun is shining brightly, and he cannot sacrifice to-day's pleasure, although he knows the disgrace it will bring to-morrow. So it is with the intemperate man: he says, 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil, and the good thereof; let me have my portion now."

So that one great secret of the world's victory lies in the mighty power of saying "*Now*."

2. The tyranny of the sensual.

I call it *tyranny*, because the evidences of the
are all powerful, in spite of the protestations
reason. In vain you try to persuade the child
is moving, and not the trees which seem to fl
the carriage; in vain we remind ourselves th
apparently solid earth on which we stand, and
seems so immovable, is in reality flying throu
regions of space with an inconceivable rapid
vain philosophers would persuade us that the
which the eye beholds resides not in the object
but in our own perception;—we are victims
apparent, and the verdict of the senses is taken
of the verdict of the reason. Precisely so is
the enjoyments of the world. The man who di
terday, and whom the world called a successful
for what did he live? He lived for this worl
gained this world. Houses, lands, name, posit
society — all that earth could give of enjoyment
had; he was the man of whom the Redeemer sa
his thoughts were occupied in planning how
down his barns and build greater. We hear me
plain of the sordid love of gold; but gold is m
medium of exchange for other things. Gold i
titles, name, comfort — all that the world can
If the world be *all*, it is *wise* to live for gold.
may be some little difference in the degree of de
tion in different forms of worldliness; it is p
that the ambitious man who lives for power is
what higher than he who merely lives for ap
and he again may be a trifle higher than the
seeker after gold; but, after all, looking closely
matter, you will find that, in respect of the obje

their idolatry, they agree in this, that all belong to the present. Therefore says the Apostle, all that is in the world, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world," and are only various forms of one great tyranny. And then, when such a man is at the brink of death, the words said to the man in our Lord's parable must be said to him: "Thou fool, the houses thou hast built, the enjoyments thou hast prepared, and all those things which have formed thy life for years — when thy soul is taken from them, what shall they profit thee?"

3. The spirit of society.

The *World* has various meanings in Scripture: it does not always mean the Visible, as opposed to the Invisible; nor the Present, as opposed to the Future; it sometimes stands for the secular spirit of the day — the Voice of Society.

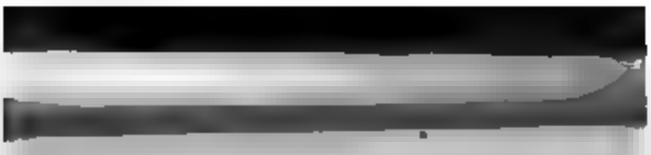
Our Saviour says, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own." The apostle says: "Be not conformed to this world;" and to the Gentiles he writes, "In times past ye walked according to the course of this world, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience." In these verses a tone, a temper, a spirit, is spoken of. There are two things, — the Church and the World, — two spirits pervading different bodies of men, brought before us in these verses: those called the Spirit-born, and those called the World, which is to be overcome by the Spirit-born, as in the text: "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." Let us understand what is meant by the Church of God. When we speak of the Church we generally mean a society to

aid men in their progress God-wards; but the
of God is by no means coëxtensive in any a
that organized institution which we *call* the
Sometimes it is nearly coëxtensive; that is, n
on earth who are born of God are found wi
pale, nearly all who are born of the world are
ous to it; but sometimes the born of God ha
found distinct from the Institution called the
opposed to it — persecuted by it. The Instit
the Church is a blessed ordinance of God, o
on earth for the purpose of representing the
Church and of extending its limits, but still c
ordinate to it.

The Eternal Church is "the general assem
church of the first-born which are written in h
the selected spirits of the Most High, who ar
gling with the evil of their day; — sometimes al
Elijah, and like him longing that their work wa
sometimes conscious of their union with eac
God is forever raising up a succession of thes
brave, His true, His good. Apostolical succes
taught sometimes, means simply this, — a su
of miraculous powers flowing in a certain lin
true apostolic succession is, not a succession in
tary line, or line marked by visible signs whi
can always identify, but a succession emphaticall
ual. The Jews looked for a hereditary suc
they thought that, because they were Abraham
the spiritual succession was preserved; the Re
told them that "God was able of those stones
up children unto Abraham." Therefore this i
spiritual succession — in the hands of God alo
they are here called the God-born, coming i

world variously qualified: sometimes baptized with the spirit which makes them, like James and John, the "Sons of Thunder:" sometimes with a milder spirit, as Barnabas, which makes them "Sons of Consolation," sometimes having their souls indurated into an adamantine hardness, which makes them living stones, — rocks like Peter, against which the billows of this world dash themselves in vain, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. But, whether as apostles, or visitors of the poor, or parents of a family, born to do a work on earth, to speak a word, to discharge a mission which they themselves perhaps do not know till it is accomplished, — these are the Church of God, the children of the Most High, the noble army of the Spirit-born! Opposed to this stands the mighty confederacy called the world. But beware of fixing on individual men, in order to stigmatize them as the world. You may not draw a line and say, "We are the sons of God, ye are the world." The world is not so much individual as it is a certain spirit; the course of this world is "the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience." The world and the Church are annexed as inseparably as the elements which compose the atmosphere. Take the smallest portion of it that you will, in a cubic inch the same proportions are found as in a temple. In the ark there was a Ham; in the small band of the twelve apostles there was a Judas.

The spirit of the world is forever altering — impalpable: forever eluding in fresh forms, your attempts to seize it. In the days of Noah, the spirit of the world was *violence*. In Elijah's day, it was *idolatry*. In the day of Christ, it was *power* concentrated and



ed in the government of Rome. In o
is the *love of money*. It enters in
ons into different bosoms; it is for
form in contiguous towns, in the fas
ing place, and in the commercial city: i
at Athens, and another in Corinth. Th
of the world — a thing in my heart and
struggled against, not so much in the
as in the silent battle to be done wit
souls. Pass we on now to consider —

The victory of faith.

Faith is a theological expression; we are ap
get that it has any other than a theological
yet it is the commonest principle of man's d
called in that region prudence, enterprise, c
such name. It is in effect the principle on
alone any human superiority can be gained.
in religion is the same principle as faith in
matters, differing only in its object: it rises t
successive stages. When, in reliance upon you
ise, your child gives up the half-hour's idlenes
day for the holiday of to-morrow, he lives by
a future supersedes the present pleasure. W
abstains from over-indulgence of the appetite,
ance upon your word that the result will be p
sickness, sacrificing the present pleasure for f
future punishment, he acts on faith: I do not s
this is a high exercise of faith; it is a very low
but it *is* faith.

Once more: the same motive of action m
carried on into manhood. In our own time
religious principles have been exemplified in th

jugation of a vice. The habit of intoxication has been broken by an appeal to the principle of combination, and the principle of belief. Men were taught to feel that they were not solitary strugglers against the vice; they were enrolled in a mighty army, identified in principles and interests. Here was the principle of the Church — association for reciprocated strength; they were thus taught the inevitable result of the indulgence of the vice. The missionaries of temperance went through the country contrasting the wretchedness, and the degradation, and the filth of drunkenness, with the domestic comfort, and the health, and the regular employment, of those who were masters of themselves. So far as men believed this, and gave up the tyranny of the present for the hope for the future, so far they lived by faith. Brethren, I do not say that this was a high triumph for the principle of faith; it was, in fact, little more than selfishness; it was a high future balanced against a low present; only the preference of a future and higher physical enjoyment to a mean and lower one. Yet still to be ruled by this influence raises a man in the scale of being: it is a low virtue, prudence, a form of selfishness; yet prudence is a virtue. The merchant, who forecasts, saves, denies himself systematically, through years, to amass a fortune, is not a very lofty being, yet he is higher, as a man, than he who is sunk in mere bodily gratifications. You would not say that the intemperate man, who has become temperate in order, merely, to gain by that temperance honor and happiness, is a great man; but you would say he was a higher and a better man than he who is enslaved by his passions, or than the gambler who im-

providently stakes all upon a moment's thro
worldly mother, who plans for the advancem
family, and sacrifices solid enjoyments for a
alliance, is only *worldly* wise; yet in that mar
and worldly prudence there is the exercise
control which raises her above the mere gid
ure-hunter of the hour; for want of self-contr
weakness of our nature — to restrain, to wai
trol present feeling with a large foresight, i
strength.

Once more, instead of a faith like that of t
which overleaps a few hours, or that of the
man, which overpasses years, there may b
which transcends the whole span of life, anc
of looking for temporal enjoyments, looks for
in a future beyond the grave, instead of
limited to time.

This is again a step. The child has sac
day; the man has sacrificed a little more.
has now reached a stage which deserves to l
religious. Not that this, however, is very gr
does but prefer a happiness hereafter to a h
enjoyed here, an eternal well-being instead o
poral well-being. It is but prudence on a gra
another form of selfishness, an anticipation of
rewards instead of finite, and not the mor
because of the infinitude of the gain; and ye
what is often taught as religion in books and
We are told that sin is wrong, because it will
miserable hereafter. Guilt is represented as th
sightedness which barters, for a home on earth
in Heaven.

In the text-book of ethics studied in one

universities, virtue is defined as that which is done at the command of God, for the sake of an eternal reward. So, then, religion is nothing more than a calculation of infinite and finite quantities; vice is nothing more than a grand imprudence, and heaven is nothing more than selfishness rewarded with eternal well-being!

Yet this, you will observe, is a necessary step in the development of faith. Faith is the conviction that God is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him; and there is a moment in human progress when the anticipated rewards and punishments must be of a Mahometan character — the happiness of the senses. It was thus that the Jews were disciplined; out of a coarse, rude, infantine state, they were educated, by rewards and punishments, to abstain from present sinful gratification. At first, the promise of the life which now is; afterwards, the promise of that which is to come. But, even then, the rewards and punishments of a future state were spoken of, by inspiration itself, as of an arbitrary character; and some of the best of the Israelites, in looking to the recompense of reward, seemed to have anticipated, coarsely, recompense in exchange for duties performed.

The last step is that which alone deserves to be called Christian Faith. "Who is he that overcometh, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ?" The difference between the faith of the Christian and that of the man of the world, or the mere ordinary religionist, is not a difference in mental operation, but in the object of the faith; to believe that Jesus is the Christ is the peculiarity of Christian faith.

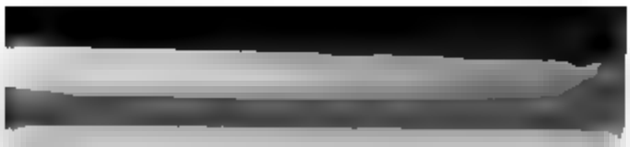
The anticipated heaven of the Christian differs from

the anticipated heaven of any other man, not
distinctness with which its imagery is perceiv
in the kind of objects which are hoped for
apostle has told us the character of heaven.
hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it e
into the heart of man to conceive the things
God hath prepared for them that love Him,"—
glorious words are sometimes strangely misinter
as if the apostle merely meant rhetorically to
the conception of the heavenly world, as of som
beyond all power to imagine or to paint. The
meant something infinitely deeper; the heaven
is not only that which "eye hath not seen," bu
which eye can *never* see; its glories are not
kind at all which can ever stream in forms of
on the eye, or pour in melody upon the enra
ear,—not such joys as genius, in its most gifted
(here called "the heart of man"), can invent or
ine; it is something which these sensuous orgs
ours never can appreciate,—bliss of another
altogether, revealed to the spirit of man by the
of God,—joys such as spirit alone can receive
you ask what these are? "The fruits of the
are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness,
ness, faith, meekness, temperance." That is he
and therefore the apostle tells us that he alone
"believeth that Jesus is the Christ," and only he,
that. What is it to believe that Jesus is the Chri
That He is the Anointed One,—that His life i
anointed life, the only blessed life, the blessed
divine for thirty years?—Yes, but if so, the bl
life still, continued throughout all eternity; unless
believe that, you do not believe that Jesus is the C

What is the blessedness that you expect? — to have the joys of earth, with the addition of the element of eternity? Men think that heaven is to be a compensation for earthly loss. The saints are earthly-wretched here, the children of this world are earthly-happy; but *that* they think, shall be all reversed, — Lazarus, beyond the grave, shall have the purple, and the fine linen, and the splendor, and the houses, and the lands, which Dives had on earth; the one had them for time, the other shall have them for eternity. That is the heaven that men expect, — this earth sacrificed *now*, in order that it may be re-granted *forever*.

Nor will this expectation be reversed, except by a reversal of the nature. None can anticipate such a heaven as God has revealed, except they that are born of the Spirit; therefore, to believe that Jesus is the Christ, a man must be born of God. You will observe that no other victory overcomes the world; for this is what St. John means by saying, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ?" For then it comes to pass that a man begins to feel that to do wrong is hell; and that to love God, to be like God, to have the mind of Christ, is the only heaven. Until this victory is gained, the world retains its stronghold in the heart.

Do you think that the temperate man has overcome the world, who, instead of the short-lived rapture of intoxication, chooses regular employment, health, and prosperity? Is it not the world, in another form, which has his homage? Or, do you suppose that the so-called religious man is really the world's conqueror, by being content to give up seventy years of enjoyment in order to win innumerable ages of the



no species of enjoyment? Has he no
earth a hell, in order that earthly thing
heaven forever?

s the victory of faith proceeds from st
r: the first victory is when the present
ed by the future; the last, when the Visit
nd is despised in comparison of the Invisi
d. Then earth has lost its power forev
that it has to give be lost eternally, the
s still infinite.

III.

[Preached Whitsunday, May 19, 1850.]

THE DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT.

1 Corinthians xii. 4. — "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."

According to a view which contains in it a profound truth, the ages of the world are divisible into three dispensations, presided over by the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

In the dispensation of the Father, God was known as a Creator; creation manifested His eternal power and Godhead, and the religion of mankind was the religion of Nature.

In the dispensation of the Son, God manifested Himself to humanity through man; the Eternal Word spoke, through the inspired and gifted of the human race, to those that were uninspired and ungifted. This was the dispensation of the prophets: its climax was the advent of the Redeemer: it was completed when *perfect* Humanity manifested God to man. The characteristic of this dispensation was that God revealed Himself by an authoritative Voice, speaking from without, and the highest manifestation of God whereof man was capable was a Divine Humanity. The age in which we at present live is the dispensa-

of the Spirit, in which God has commu
: by the highest revelation, and in the mo
communion of which man is capable; no
th ugh creation, no more as an authoritative
from without, but as a Law within, as a Spirit m
h a spirit. This is the dispensation of whi
ophet said of old, that the time should com
should no longer teach every man his b
every man his neighbor, saying, "Know the
— that is, by a will revealed by external an
from other human minds, — "for they should al
Him, from the least of them to the greatest."
the dispensation, too, of whose close the Apost
speaks thus: "Then shall the Son also be subject
that hath put all things under Him, that God
all in all."

The outward humanity is to disappear, that
ward union may be complete. To the same
he speaks in another place: "Yea, though w
known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth kn
Him no more." For this reason, the Ascensi
necessary before Pentecost could come; the
was not given, we are told, because Jesus w
yet glorified. It was necessary for the Son to
pear as an outward authority, in order that he
reäppear as an inward principle of life. Our
tion is no longer God manifested in a Christ
us, but as a Christ *within* us, the hope of glory
day is the selected anniversary of that memorat
when the first proof was given to the senses,
gift of Pentecost, that that spiritual dispensatic
begun.

There is a two-fold way in which the operati

the Spirit on mankind may be considered — His influence on the Church as a whole, and His influence on individuals; both of these are brought together in the text. It branches, therefore, into a two-fold division.

I. Spiritual gifts conferred on individuals.

II. Spiritual union of the Church.

I. Let us distinguish between the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. By the Spirit, the apostle meant the vital principle of new life from God, common to all believers — the animating Spirit of the Church of God; by the gifts, he meant the diversities of form in which He operates on individuals, — its influence varied according to their respective peculiarities and characteristics. In the twenty-eighth verse of this chapter a full catalogue of gifts is found. Looking at them generally, we discover two classes into which they may be divided: the first are natural, the second are supernatural. The first are those capacities which are originally found in human nature — personal endowments of mind, a character elevated and enlarged by the gift of the Spirit; the second are those which were created and called into existence by the sudden approach of the same influence. Just as if the temperature of this Northern hemisphere were raised suddenly, and a mighty tropical river were to pour its fertilizing inundation over the country, the result would be the impartation of a vigorous and gigantic growth to the vegetation already in existence, and at the same time the development of life in seeds and germs which had long lain latent in the soil, incapable of vegetation in the unkindly climate of their birth.

in the same way, the flood of a Divi
suddenly into the souls of men, enlarg
l qualities which had been used alrea
the same time *developed* powers which neve
have become apparent in the cold, low temperat
ıral life.

among the natural gifts, we may instance
ding, healing, the power of government.
a gift, natural or acquired. To know,
g; to have the capacity of imparting kno
nother.

physician's art, again, is no supernatur
tery; long and careful study of physical laws
tate him for his task. To govern, again, is a
faculty; it may be acquired by habit, but the
some who never could acquire it. Some me
born to command; place them in what sphe
will, others acknowledge their secret influenc
subordinate themselves to their will. The fac
organization, the secret of rule, need no super
power. They exist among the uninspired. N
doctrine of the apostle was, that all these are
formed and renovated by the spirit of a new
such a way as to become almost new powers, or
calls them, gifts of the Spirit. A remarkable il
tion of this is his view of the human body. If
be anything common to us by nature, it is the me
of our corporeal frame; yet the apostle taugh
these, guided by the Spirit as its instrument
obeying a holy will, became transfigured; so t
his language, the body becomes a temple of the
Ghost, and the meanest faculties, the lowest app
the humblest organs, are ennobled by the Spirit

which guides them. Thus he bids the Romans yield themselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

The second class of gifts are supernatural: of these we find two preëminent — the gift of tongues, and the gift of prophecy.

It does not appear that the gift of tongues was merely the imparted faculty of speaking foreign languages. It could not be that the highest gift of God to his Church merely made them rivals of the linguist; it would rather seem that the Spirit of God, mingling with the soul of man, supernaturally elevated its aspirations and glorified its conceptions, so that an entranced state of ecstasy was produced, and feelings called into energy for the expression of which the ordinary forms of speech were found inadequate. Even in a far lower department, when a man becomes possessed of ideas for which his ordinary vocabulary supplies no sufficient expression, his language becomes broken, incoherent, struggling, and almost unnaturally elevated; much more was it to be expected that, when divine and new feelings rushed like a flood upon the soul, the language of men would have become strange and extraordinary; but in that supposed case, wild as the expressions might appear to one coldly looking on and not participating in the feelings of the speaker, they would be quite sufficient to convey intelligible meaning to any one affected by the same emotions. Where perfect sympathy exists, incoherent utterance — a word, a syllable — is quite as efficient as elaborate sentences. Now, this is precisely the account given of the phenomenon which attended the gift of

tongues. On the day of Pentecost, all who w
the same state of spiritual emotion as those who
understood the speakers; each was as intellig
all as if he spoke in their several tongues: to
who were coolly and sceptically watching, the
appeared like those of intoxication. A similar a
is given by the Apostle Paul. The voice appea
unsympathetic ears, as that of a barbarian; t
initiated and unbelieving, coming in, heard n
that was articulate to them, but only the ravi
insanity.

The next was the gift of prophecy. Prophe
several meanings in Scripture. Sometimes it
the power of predicting future events; sometir
entranced state, accompanied with ravings; som
it appears to mean exposition: but prophecy,
miraculous gift granted to the early Church, se
have been a state of communion with the mi
God lower than that which was called the g
tongues; at least, less ecstatic, less rapt into the
to come; more under the guidance of the re
more under the control of calm consciousness —
might say, less supernatural.

Upon these gifts we make two observations:

1. Even the highest were not accompanied
spiritual faultlessness. Inspiration was one thing,
libility another. The gifts of the Spirit were, lik
gifts of nature, subordinated to the will, capab
being used for good or evil, — sometimes pure,
times mixed with human infirmity. The super
rally gifted man was no mere machine, — no a
aton, ruled in spite of himself by a superior s
Disorder, vanity, overweening self-estimation, p

accompany those gifts, and the prophetic utterance itself might be degraded to a mere brawling in the Church. Therefore St. Paul established laws of control; declared the need of subjection and rule over spiritual gifts. The spirits of the prophets were to be subject to the prophets; if those in the ecstatic state were tempted to break out into utterance, and unable to interpret what it meant, those so gifted were to hold their peace.

The prophet poured out the truths supernaturally imparted to his higher spirit, in an inspired and impassioned eloquence which was intelligible even to the unspiritual, and was one of the appointed means of convincing the unconverted. The lesson derivable from this is not obsolete even in the present day. There is nothing perhaps precisely identical in our own day with those gifts of the early Church; but genius and talent are uncommon gifts, which stand in a somewhat analogous relation—in a closer one, certainly, than more ordinary endowments. The flights of genius, we know, appear like maniac ravings to minds not elevated to the same spiritual level. Now, these are perfectly compatible with misuse, abuse, and moral disorder. The most gifted of our countrymen has left this behind him as his epitaph—"The greatest, wisest, *meanest* of mankind." The most glorious gift of poetic insight itself in a way divine, having something akin to Deity, is too often associated with degraded life and vicious character. Those gifts which elevate us above the rest of our species, whereby we stand aloof and separate from the crowd, convey no moral, nor even mental infallibility; nay, they have in themselves a peculiar danger, whereas that gift which

is common to us all as brethren, the animating
of a divine life, in whose soil the spiritual being
is rooted, cannot make us vain; we *cannot* pric
selves on *that*, for it is common to us all.

2. Again, the gifts which were higher in one
were lower in another. As supernatural gift
would rank thus — the gift of tongues before
ecy, and prophecy before teaching; but as bl
to be desired, this order is reversed: rather th
gift of tongues, St. Paul bids the Corinthians
that they might prophesy. Inferior again to pr
was the quite simple, and, as we should say,
faculty of explaining truth. Now, the principl
which that was tried was that of utility; — not
in the low sense of the utilitarian, who measu
value of a thing by its susceptibility of applica
the purposes of this present life, but a utility
measure was love, charity. The apostle cons
that gift most desirable by which men might mos
one another. . And hence that noble declarati
one of the most gifted of mankind, "I had
speak five words with my understanding, that I
teach others also, than ten thousand words
unknown tongue." Our estimate is almost the r
of this: we value a gift in proportion to its rar
distinctive character, separating its possessor fr
rest of his fellow-men; whereas, in truth, those
which leave us in lonely majesty apart from our sp
useless to them, benefiting ourselves alone, a
the most godlike, but the least so; because the
dissevered from that beneficent charity which
very being of God. Your lofty incommun
thoughts, your ecstasies, and aspirations, and

templative raptures, — in virtue of which you have estimated yourself as the porcelain of the earth, of another nature altogether than the clay of common spirits, — tried by the test of Charity, what is there grand in those, if they cannot be applied as blessings to those that are beneath you? One of our countrymen has achieved for himself extraordinary scientific renown; he pierced the mysteries of nature he analyzed her processes, he gave new elements to the world. The same man applied his rare intellect to the construction of a simple and very common instrument, — that well-known lamp which has been the guardian of the miner's life from the explosion of fire. His discoveries are his nobility in this world; his trifling invention gives him rank in the world to come. By the former he shines as one of the brightest luminaries in the firmament of science; by the latter, evincing a spirit animated and directed by Christian love, he takes his place as one of the Church of God. And such is ever the true order of rank which graces occupy in reference to gifts. The most trifling act, which is marked by usefulness to others, is nobler in God's sight than the most brilliant accomplishment of genius. To teach a few Sunday-school children, week after week, commonplace simple truths, — persevering in spite of dulness and mean capacities, — is a more glorious occupation than the highest meditations or creations of genius which edify or instruct only our own solitary soul.

II. The spiritual unity of the Church — "the same Spirit."

Men have formed to themselves two ideas of unity:

is a sameness of form — of expressi
an identity of spirit. Some of the
have fondly hoped to realize an unity
of Christ which should be manifested
expressions in everything; their imagi
loved to paint, as the ideal of a C
state in which the same liturgy sh
oughout the world, the same eccles
ment, even the same vestments, the sa
hours, the same form of architecture.
conceive nothing more entirely one
a so constituted that the same prayers,
same expressions, at the very same m
should be ascending to the Eternal Ear. The
others who have thrown aside entirely this i
chimerical; who have not only ceased to hope
even to wish it; who, if it could be realized,
consider it a matter of regret; who feel that the
of men are various — their modes and habits of th
their original capacities and acquired associati
finitely diverse; and who, perceiving that the
the universal system is manifoldness in unity,
ceased to expect any other oneness for the Chu
Christ than that of a sameness of spirit, showing
through diversities of gifts. Among these las
the Apostle Paul: his large and glorious mind re
in the contemplation of the countless manifest
of spiritual nature, beneath which he detecte
and the same pervading Mind. Now, let us lo
this matter somewhat more closely.

1. All real unity is manifold. Feelings in thems
identical find countless forms of expression: f
stance, sorrow is the same feeling throughout the h

race; but the Oriental prostrates himself upon the ground, throws dust upon his head, tears his garments, is not ashamed to break out into the most violent lamentations. In the North, we rule our grief in public; suffer not even a quiver to be seen upon the lip or brow, and consider calmness as the appropriate expression of manly grief. Nay, two sisters of different temperament will show their grief diversely. One will love to dwell upon the theme of the qualities of the departed; the other feels it a sacred sorrow, on which the lips are sealed forever: yet, would it not be idle to ask which of them has the truest affection? Are they not both in their own way true? In the same East, men take off their sandals in devotion, we exactly reverse the procedure, and uncover the head. The Oriental prostrates himself in the dust before his sovereign; even before his God the Briton only kneels: yet, would it not again be idle to ask which is the essential and proper form of reverence? Is not true reverence in all cases modified by the individualities of temperament and education? Should we not say, in all these forms worketh one and the same spirit of reverence? Again, in the world as God has made it, one law shows itself under diverse, even opposite manifestations; lead sinks in water, wood floats upon the surface. In former times men assigned these different results to different forces, laws, and gods. A knowledge of nature has demonstrated that they are expressions of one and the same law; and the great difference between the educated and the uneducated man is this: the uneducated sees in this world nothing but an infinite collection of unconnected facts, — a broken, distorted, and fragmentary system, which his mind can by no means reduce to

he educated man, in proportion to his
s the number of laws diminished, — beh
old appearances of nature the expressio
ws, by degrees fewer, till at last it become
to his conception that they are all reduci
and that that which lies beneath the innum
nena of nature is the One Spirit, — God.

l *living* unity is spiritual, not formal; not
ut manifoldness. You may have a unity
ntity of form; but it is a lifeless unity. Th
eness on the sea-beach, — that unity whic
waves have produced by curling and fo
destroying the angularities of individual form, s
every stone presents the same monotony of aspec
you must fracture each again in order to distin
whether you hold in your hand a mass of flint or
ment of basalt. There is no life in unity such as

But, as soon as you arrive at a unity that is livin
form becomes more complex, and you search in va
uniformity. In the parts, it must be found, if fou
all, in the sameness of the pervading life. The
tration given by the apostle is that of the human
— a higher unity, he says, by being composed of
members, than if every member were but a repe
of a single type. It is conceivable that God
have moulded such a form for human life;
conceivable that every cause, instead of prod
in different nerves a variety of sensations, sh
have affected every one in a mode precisely
lar; that instead of producing a sensation of sou
sensation of color, a sensation of taste, the outw
causes of nature, be they what they may, should

given but one unvaried feeling to every sense, and that the whole universe should have been light or sound.

That would have been unity, if sameness be unity; but, says the apostle, if the whole body were seeing, where were the hearing? That uniformity would have been irreparable loss, — the loss of every part that was merged into the one. What is the body's unity? Is it not this? The unity of a living consciousness which marvellously animates every separate atom of the frame, and reduces each to the performance of a function fitted to the welfare of the whole, — its own, not another's; so that the inner spirit can say of the remotest and in form most unlike member, "That, too, is myself."

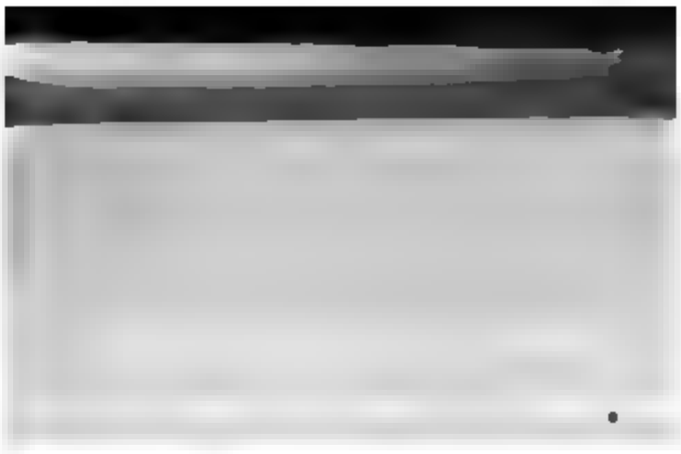
3. None but a spiritual unity can preserve the rights both of the individual and the Church. All other systems of unity, except the apostolic, either sacrifice the Church to the individual, or the individual to the Church.

Some have claimed the right of private judgment in such a way that every individual opinion becomes truth, and every utterance of private conscience right; thus the Church is sacrificed to the individual, and the universal conscience, the common faith, becomes as nothing; the spirits of the prophets are not subject to the prophets. Again, there are others, who, like the Church of Rome, would surrender the conscience of each man to the conscience of the Church, and coërce the particulars of faith into exact coincidence with a formal creed. Spiritual unity saves the right of both in God's system. The Church exists for the individual, just as truly as the individual for the Church. The Church is, then, most perfect when all its powers con-

nd are concentrated on the formation
of individual character; and the indiv
ost complete — that is, most a Christian
practically learned that his life is not h
owed to others, — "that no man liveth to
no man dieth to himself." Now, spiritu
ts the sanctity of the individual con
everently the Apostle Paul considered it
ow tenderly! When once it became a m
uence, this was his principle laid down in
pute: "Let every man be fully persuade
mind." The belief of the whole world
that thing true to me which to me seem
The conscience of the whole world cannot
a thing right to me, if I in my heart bel
wrong. You may coerce the conscience, y
control men's belief, and you may produce a u
so doing; but it is the unity of pebbles on t
shore, — a lifeless identity of outward form, v
cohesion between the parts, — a dead sea-be
which nothing grows, and where the very se
dies.

Lastly, it respected the sanctity of individua
acter. Out of eight hundred millions of the huma
a few features diversify themselves into so many
of countenance, that scarcely two could be mistal
each other. There are no two leaves on the sam
like; nor two sides of the same leaf, unless y
and kill it. There is a sacredness in individual
character; each one born into this world is a fres
soul intended by his Maker to develop himself in
fresh way. We are what we are; we cannot be
other than ourselves. We reach perfection not by

ing, much less by aiming at originality; but by consistently and steadily working out the life which is common to us all, according to the character which God has given us. And thus will the Church of God be one, at last, — will present a unity like that of heaven. There is one universe in which each separate star differs from another in glory; one Church in which a single Spirit, the life of God, pervades each separate soul; and, just in proportion as that life becomes exalted, does it enable every one to shine forth in the distinctness of his own separate individuality, like the stars of heaven.



IV.

[Preached May 26, 1850.]

THE TRINITY.

1 Thess. v. 23. — "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

THE knowledge of God is the blessedness of To know God, and to be known by Him — to God, and to be loved by Him — is the most pr treasure which this life has to give; properly ing, the only treasure; properly speaking, the knowledge; for all knowledge is valuable only as it converges towards and ends in the knowled God, and enables us to acquaint ourselves with and be at peace with Him. The doctrine of the ity is the sum of all that knowledge which ha been gained by man. I say gained *as yet*. F presume not to maintain that, in the ages which come hereafter, our knowledge shall not be super by a higher knowledge; we presume not to say in a state of existence future — yea, even here this earth, at that period which is mysteri referred to in Scripture as "the coming of Son of Man" — there shall not be given to the an intellectual conception of the Almighty, a visio

the Eternal, in comparison with whose brightness and clearness our present knowledge of the Trinity shall be as rudimentary and as childlike as the knowledge of the Jew was in comparison with the knowledge of the Christian.

Now, the passage which I have undertaken to expound to-day is one in which the doctrine of the Trinity is brought into connection practically with the doctrine of our humanity. Before entering into it, brethren, let us lay down these two observations and duties for ourselves. In the first place, let us examine the doctrine of the Trinity ever in the spirit of charity. A clear statement of the deepest doctrine that man can know, and the intellectual conception of that doctrine, are by no means easy. We are puzzled and perplexed by *words;* we fight respecting *words.* Quarrels are nearly always verbal quarrels. Words lose their meaning in the course of time; nay, the very words of the Athanasian creed which we read to-day mean not, at this age, the same thing which they meant ages past. Therefore it is possible that men, externally Trinitarians, may differ from each other, though using the same words, as greatly as a Unitarian differs from a Trinitarian. There may be found, in the same Church and in the same congregation men holding all possible shades of opinion, though agreeing externally and in words. I speak within the limit of my own experience when I say that persons have been known and heard to express the language of bitter condemnation respecting Unitarianism who, when examined and calmly required to draw out verbally the meaning of their own conceptions, have been proved to be holding all the time—

ously — the very doctrine of Sabelli
ase doctrine is condemned by the Church
as that of Unitarianism. Therefore,
om all this a large and catholic charity.
n almost every congregation, themselve
wing it, Trinitarians who are practically Tri-t
hipping three Gods; and Sabellians, or w
of one person under three different mar
To know God so that we may be said, int
to appreciate Him, is blessed: to be una
is a misfortune. Be content with you
ness, in comparison with others' misfor
ot give to that misfortune the additional sti
ral and unchristian vituperation.

The next observation we have to lay down fo
selves is, that we should examine this doctrine i
spirit of modesty. There are those who are in
to sneer at the Trinitarian; those to whom the
trine appears merely a contradiction — a puzzle
entangled, labyrinthine enigma, in which there
meaning whatever. But let all such remember
though the doctrine may appear to them absur
cause they have not the proper conception of it,
of the profoundest thinkers and some of the h
spirits among mankind have believed in this
trine — have clung to it as a matter of life or d
Let them be assured of this, that whether the doc
be true or false, it is not necessarily a doctrine
contradictory. Let them be assured of this, i
modesty, that such men never could have be
unless there was latent in the doctrine a deep t
perchance the truth of God.

We pass on now to the consideration of this verse, under the following divisions:

I. We shall view it as a triad in discord: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless."

II. As Trinity in Unity: "The God of peace sanctify you wholly."

I. We take, then, first of all, for our consideration, the triad in discord: "I pray God your whole body and soul and spirit be preserved blameless."

The apostle here divides human nature into a threefold division; and here we have to observe again the difficulty often experienced in understanding words. Thus, words in the Athanasian creed have become obsolete, or lost their meaning; so that in the present day the words "person," "substance," "procession," "generation," to an ordinary person, mean almost nothing. So this language of the apostle, when rendered into English, shows no difference whatever between "soul" and "spirit." We say, for instance, that the soul of man has departed from him. We also say that the spirit of a man has departed from him. There is no distinct difference between the two; but in the original two very different kinds of thoughts, two very different modes of conception, are presented by the two English words "soul" and "spirit."

It is our business, therefore, in the first place, to understand what is meant by this three-fold division. When the apostle speaks of the body, what he means is the animal life — that which we share in common with beasts, birds, and reptiles; for our life, my Christian brethren, our sensational existence, differs but

little from that of the lower animals. There
same external form, — the same material in the
vessels, in the nerves, and in the muscular
Nay, more than that, our appetites and instin
alike, our lower pleasures like their lower ple
our lower pain like their lower pain; our life
ported by the same means, and our animal fu
are almost indistinguishably the same.

But, once more, the apostle speaks of what l
the "soul." What the apostle meant by what is
lated "soul" is the immortal part of man — the
terial as distinguished from the material; thos
ers, in fact, which man has by nature — powers n
which are yet to survive the grave. There is
tinction made in Scripture by our Lord betwee
two things. "Fear not," says He, "them wh
kill the body; but rather fear Him who can d
both body and soul in hell."

We have, again, to observe, respecting this
what the apostle called the "soul" is not simp
tinguishable from the body, but also from the
and on that distinction I have already touched
the soul the apostle means our powers natural
powers which we have by nature. Herein is the
distinguishable from the spirit. In the Epistle t
Corinthians we read, "But the natural man rece
not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are
ishness unto him; neither can he know them, be
they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spi
judgeth all things." Observe, there is a distin
drawn between the natural man and the spir
What is there translated "natural" is derived
precisely the same word as that which is here

lated "soul." So that we may read, just as correctly, "The man under the dominion of the soul receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." And again, the apostle, in the same Epistle to the Corinthians, writes: "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural;" that is, the endowments of the soul precede the endowments of the spirit. You have the same truth in other places. The powers that belong to the spirit were not the first developed; but the powers which belonged to the soul, that is, the powers of nature. Again, in the same chapter, reference is made to the natural and spiritual body. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Literally, there is a body governed by the soul, that is, powers natural; and there is a body governed by the Spirit, that is, higher nature. Let, then, this be borne in mind, that what the apostle calls "soul" is the same as that which he calls, in another place, the "natural man." These powers are divisible into two branches — the intellectual powers and the moral sense. The intellectual powers man has by nature. Man need not be regenerated in order to possess the power of reasoning, or in order to invent. The intellectual powers belong to what the apostle calls the "soul." The moral sense distinguishes between right and wrong. The apostle tells us, in the Epistle to the Romans, that the heathen — manifestly natural men — had the "work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness."

The third division of which the apostle speaks he

calls the "spirit;" and by the spirit he mean
life in man which, in his natural state, is in a
embryo condition that it can scarcely be said t
at all, — that which is called out into powe
vitality by regeneration, the perfection of th
ers of human nature. And you will observ
it is not merely the instinctive life, nor the in
tual life, nor the moral life, but it is principal
nobler affections, — that existence, that state of
which we call love. That is the departme
human nature which the apostle calls the spiri
accordingly, when the Spirit of God was given
day of Pentecost, you will remember that a
power of man was called out, differing from wh
had before. That Spirit granted on the day of
cost did subordinate to *Himself*, and was intend
subordinate to Himself, the will, the understa
and the affection of man; but you often find
spiritual powers were distinguished from the n
powers, and existed without them. So, in the hi
state of religious life, we are told, men prayed i
spirit. Till the spirit has subordinated the under
ing, the gift of God is not complete — has not
its work. It is abundantly evident that a new life
called out. It was not merely the sharpening o
intellectual powers; it was calling out powers of
ration and love to God; those affections which
in them something boundless, — that are not limite
this earth, but seek their completion in the min
God Himself.

Now, what we have to say respecting this th
fold state of man is, it is a state of discord. Le
take up a very simple, popular, every-day illustra

We hear it remarked frequently in conversation, of a man, that if only his will were commensurate with his knowledge, he would be a great man. His knowledge is great; his powers are almost unbounded; he has gained knowledge from nearly every department of science; but, somehow or other — you cannot tell why — there is such an indecision, such a vacillation, about the man, that he scarcely knows what to do, and, perhaps, does nothing in this world. You find it remarked, respecting another class of men, that their will is strong, almost unbounded in its strength, — they have iron wills, — yet there is something so narrow in their conceptions, something so bounded in their views, so much of stagnation in their thoughts, so much of prejudice in all their opinions, that their will is prevented from being directed to anything in a proper manner. Here is the discord in human nature. There is a distinction between the will and the understanding. And sometimes a feeble will goes with a strong understanding, or a powerful will is found in connection with great feebleness or ignorance of the understanding.

Let us, however, go into this more specially. The first cause of discord in this three-fold state of man is the state in which the body is the ruler; and this, my Christian brethren, you find most visibly developed in the uneducated and irreligious poor. I say uneducated and irreligious, because it is by no means education alone which can subordinate the flesh to the higher man. The religious, uneducated poor man may be master of his lower passions; but in the uneducated and irreligious poor man these show themselves in full force. This discord, this want of unity, appears,

as it were, in a magnified form. There is a stro
— health bursting, as it were, at every pore, w
athletic body; but coarse, and rude, and intelle
weak, almost an animal. When you are regard
upper classes of society, you see less distinc
absence of the spirit, unless you look with a s
eye. The coarseness has passed away, the rud
no longer seen; there is a refinement in the ple
But, if you take the life led by the young men
country, — strong, athletic, healthy men, — it is
life of the flesh; the unthinking and the unpri
life, in which there is as yet no higher life dev
It is a life which, in spite of its refinement, th
condemns as the life of the sensualist.

We pass on, now, to another state of disc
state in which the soul is ruined. Brethren, t
natural result — this is what might have been ex
The natural man gradually subordinates the fle
body, to the soul. It is natural in the develop
individuals, it is natural in the development of
In the development of individuals, because tha
like, infantile life which exists at first, and is
entirely a life of appetites, gradually subsides.
wants, higher desires, loftier inclinations, ari
passions of the young man gradually subside,
degrees the more rational life comes; the
changed — the pleasures of the senses are f
for those of the intellect. It appears natural
in the development of society. Civilization w
ordinate the flesh to the soul. In the savag
you find the life of the animal. Civilization i
ing a man, on the principle of this world, to s
nate his appetites, to rule himself; and there c

refinement, and a gentleness, and a polish, and an enjoyment of intellectual pleasures; so that the man is no longer what the apostle calls a sensual man, but he becomes now what the apostle calls a natural man. We can see this character delineated in the Epistle to the Ephesians. "Then we were," says the apostle "in our Gentile state, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind." Man naturally fulfils not merely the desires of the flesh, but the desires of the mind. "And were," says the apostle, "children of wrath." One of the saddest spectacles is the decay of the natural man before the work of the Spirit has been accomplished in him. When the savage dies, when a mere infant dies, when an animal dies, there is nothing that is appalling or depressing there; but when the high, the developed intellect – when the cultivated man comes to the last hours of life, and the memory becomes less powerful, and the judgment fails, and all that belongs to nature and to earth visibly perishes, and the higher life has not been yet developed, though it is destined to survive the grave forever — even the life of God — there is here ample cause for grief; and it is no wonder that the man of genius merely should shed tears at the idea of decaying life.

II. We pass on to consider the Trinity in Unity.

All this is contained in that simple expression, "The God of peace." God is a God of unity. He makes one where before there were two. He is the God of peace, and therefore can make peace. Now, this peace, according to the Trinitarian doctrine, consists in a three-fold unity. Brethren, as we remarked respecting

this first of all, the distinction in this Trinity is
physical distinction, but a metaphysical one.
illustrations which are often given are illust
drawn from material sources. If we take only
we get into contradiction. For example, when
of personality, our idea is of a being bound
space; and then to say in this sense that thre
sons are one, and one is three, is simply contra
and abuse. Remember that the doctrine of the
is a metaphysical doctrine. It is a trinity — a d
in the mind of God. It is not three materials,
three persons in a sense we shall explain by and

In the next place, I will endeavor to expla
doctrine, — not to prove it, but to show its ratio
and to explain what it is.

The first illustration we endeavor to give in
taken from the world of matter. We will tak
material substance; we find in that substance
ties; we will say three qualities — color, shap
size. Color is not shape, shape is not size, size
color. They are three distinct essences, three d
qualities; and yet they all form one unity, one
conception, one idea — the idea, for example, of

Now, we will ascend from that into the imm
world; and here we come to something more d
still. Hitherto, we have had but three qualitie
now come to the mind of man, where we find
thing more than qualities. We will take three
will, the affections, and the thoughts, of man.
will is not his affections, neither are his affectio
thoughts; and it would be imperfect and incompl
say that these are mere qualities in the man.
are separate consciousnesses, living consciousn

as distinct and as really sundered as it is possible for three things to be, yet bound together by one unity of consciousness. Now, we have distincter proof than even this that these things are three. The anatomist can tell you that the localities of these powers are different. He can point out the seat of the nerve of sensation; he can localize the feeling of affection, he can point to a nerve and say, "There resides the locality of thought."

There are three distinct localities for three distinct qualities, personalities, consciousnesses; yet all these three are one.

Once more, we will give proof even beyond all that. The act that a man does is done by one particular part of that man. You may say it was a work of his genius, or of his fancy; it may have been a manifestation of his love, or an exhibition of his courage; yet that work was the work of the whole man: his courage, his intellect, his habits of perseverance, all helped towards the completion of that single work. Just in this way certain special works are attributed to certain personalities of the Deity; the work of redemption being attributed to one, the work of sanctification to another. And yet, just as the whole man was engaged in doing that work, so does the whole Deity perform that work which is attributed to one essential.

Once more, let us remember that principle which we expounded last Sunday, that it is the law of Being that in proportion as you rise from lower to higher life the parts are more distinctly developed, while yet the unity becomes more entire. You find, for example, in the lowest forms of animal life one organ per-

forms several functions, one organ being at th time heart and brain and blood-vessels. But wh come to man, you find all these various functi isting in different organs, and every organ mc tinctly developed; and yet the unity of a m higher unity than that of a limpet. When yo from the material world to the world immateri find that the more society is cultivated—the mo is cultivated—the more marvellous is the po developing distinct powers. In the savage li almost all one feeling; but in proportion as the education advances, and the higher life appears power and faculty develops and distinguishes and becomes distinct and separate. And yet, proportion as in a nation every part is distin unity is greater, and just in proportion as in a vidual every power is most complete, and stan most distinct, just in that proportion has th reached the entireness of his humanity.

Now, brethren, we apply all this to the mind o The Trinitarian maintains, against the Unitaris the Sabellian, that the higher you ascend in th of being, the more distinct are the consciousi and that the law of unity implies and demands a fold unity. The doctrine of Sabellianism, for ex is this, that God is but one essence—but one under different manifestations; and that when He the world He was called the Father, when He red the world He was called the Son, and when He fied the world He was called the Holy Ghost. Sabellian and the Unitarian maintain that the un God consists simply in a unity of person; and in sition to this does the Trinitarian maintain that

ness, either in man or in God, must be a unity of manifoldness.

But we will enter into this more deeply. The first power or consciousness in which God is made known to us is as the Father, the Author of our being. It is written, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." He is the Author of all life. In this sense He is not merely our Father as Christians, but the Father of mankind; and not merely the Father of mankind, but the Father of creation; and in this way the sublime language of the prophets may be taken as true, literally: "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;" and the language of the canticle, which belongs to our morning service — the deeps, the fountains, the wells, all unite in one hymn of praise, one everlasting hallelujah to God the Father, the Author of their being. In this respect, simply as the Author of life, merely as the Supreme Being, God has reference to us in relation to the body. He is the Lord of life; in Him we live, and move, and have our being. In this respect, God to us is as law — as the collected laws of the universe; and, therefore, to offend against law, and bring down the result of transgressing law, is said, in Scripture language, because applied to a person, to be provoking the wrath of God the Father.

In the next place, the second way through which the personality and consciousness of God has been revealed to us is as the Son. Brethren, we see in all those writers who have treated of the Trinity, that much stress is laid upon this eternal generation of the Son, the everlasting Sonship. It is this which we have in the Creed — the Creed which was read to-day —

"God, of the substance of the Father, begotten
the worlds;" and, again, in the Nicene Creed,
expression, which is often so wrongly read, "
God, Light of Light, very God of very God,'
absolutely nothing. There are two statemen
there. The first is this, "The Son was God
second is this, "The Son was — *of* God," show
derivation. And in that, brethren, we have
the deepest and most blessed truths of rev
The Unitarian maintains a divine humanity — a
blessed truth. There is a truth more blessed
the humanity of Deity. Before the world wa
was that in the mind of God which we may
humanity of His Divinity. It is called, in Sc
the Word — the Son — the Form of God. It is
tue of this that we have a right to attribute
our own feelings; it is in virtue of this that Sc
speaks of His wisdom, His justice, His love. L
God is what love is in man; justice in God i
justice is in man; creative power in God is wh
ative power is in man; indignation in God is that
indignation is in man, barring only this, that t
is emotional, but the other is calm, and pure, an
lastingly still. It is through this humanity in th
of God, if I may dare so to speak of Deity, that
elation became possible to man. It was the Wo
was made flesh; it was the Word that manifested
to man. It is in virtue of the connection betwee
and man, that God made man in His own image
through a long line of prophets the human tr
God could be made known to man, till it came
developed most entirely, and at large, in the in
tion of the Redeemer. Now, in this respect, it

observed that God stands connected with us in relation to the soul as the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Once more; there is a nearer, a closer, and a more enduring relation in which God stands to us — that is, the relation of the Spirit. It is to the writings of St. John that we have to turn, especially, if we desire to know the doctrines of the Spirit. You will remember the strange way in which he speaks of God. It would almost seem as if the external God has disappeared to him; nay, as if an external Christ were almost forgotten, because the internal Christ has been formed. He speaks of God as kindred with us; he speaks of Christ as Christ in us: and "if we love one another," he says, "God dwelleth in us." If a man keep the commandments, "God dwelleth in him, and he in God." So that the spiritual manifestation of God to us is that whereby He blends Himself with the soul of man.

These, then, my Christian brethren, are the three consciousnesses by which He becomes known to us. Three, we said, *known* to us. We do not dare to limit God; we do not presume to say that there are in God only three personalities, only three consciousnesses; all that we dare presume to say is this, that there are three in reference to us, and only three; that a fourth there is not; that, perchance, in the present state a fourth you cannot add to these — Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier.

Lastly, let us turn to the relation which the trinity in unity bears to the triad in discord. It is intended for the entireness of our sanctification: "the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Brethren, we dwell upon that expression "*wholly*." There is this

difference between Christianity and every oth tem: Christianity proposes to ennoble the man; every other system subordinates parts to Christianity does not despise the intellect, but i not exalt the intellect in a one-sided way; i dwells with emphasis on the third and highest p man — his spiritual affections; and these it mai are the chief and real seat of everlasting life, int to subordinate the other to themselves. Asce would crush the natural affections — destroy t petites. Asceticism feels that there is a confli tween the flesh and the spirit, and it woul an end to that conflict; it would bring back un the excision of all our natural appetites, and a desires and feelings which we have by nature. when the apostle Paul comes forward to proclai will of God, he says it is not by the crushing c body, but by the sanctification of the body: "I God your whole spirit and soul and body be served blameless unto the coming of our Lord Christ."

In this, my Christian brethren, there is one o deepest of all truths. Does a man feel himsel slave and the victim of his lower passions? — Le that man hope to subdue them merely by strug against them. Let him not by fasting, by aust by any earthly rule that he can conceive, expe subdue the flesh. The more he thinks of his vile lower feelings, the more will they be brought distinctness, and therefore into power; the more l lessly will he become their victim. The only wa which a man can subdue the flesh, is not by extinction of those feelings, but by the elevatio

their character. Let there be added to that character sublimity of aim, purity of affection; let there be given grandeur, spiritual nobleness: and then, just as the strengthening of the whole constitution of the body makes any particular and local affection disappear, so, by degrees, by the raising of the character, do these lower affections become, not extinguished or destroyed by excision, but ennobled by a new and loftier spirit breathed through them.

This is the account given by the apostle. He speaks of the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. And his remedy is to give vigor to the higher, rather than to struggle with the lower. "This I say then, walk in the spirit, and ye *shall not* fulfil the lust of the flesh."

Once more; the apostle differs from the world in this, that the world would restore this unity, and sanctify man simply from the soul. It is this which civilization pretends to effect. We hear much in these modern days of the progress of humanity. We hear of man's invention, of man's increase of knowledge; and it would seem, in all this, as if man were necessarily becoming better. Brethren, it always must be the case in that state in which God is looked upon as the Supreme Being merely, where the intellect of man is supposed to be the chief — that which makes him most kindred to his Maker. The doctrine of Christianity is this, that unity of all this discord must be made. Man is to be made one with God, not by soaring intellect, but by lowly love. It is the Spirit which guides him to all truth; not merely by rendering more acute the reasoning powers, but by convincing of sin, by humbling the man. It is the graces of

the Spirit which harmonize the man, and mak
one; and that is the end and aim and object of
Gospel — the entireness of sanctification to proc
perfectly developed man. Most of us in this
are monsters, with some part of our being b
the development of a giant, and others showin
proportions of a dwarf: a feeble, dwarfish v
mighty, full-blown passions; and therefore it i
there is to be visible, through the trinity, in
noble, manifold unity; and when the triune pow
God shall so have done its work on the entirene
our humanity that the body, soul, and spirit, have
sanctified, then shall there be exhibited, and only
a perfect affection in man to his Maker, and body,
and spirit, shall exhibit a trinity in unity.

V.

[Preached June 2, 1850.]

ABSOLUTION.

LUKE v. 21. — "And the Scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

THERE are questions which, having been again and again settled, still, from time to time, present themselves for *re*-solution; errors which, having been refuted, and cut up by the roots, reäppear in the next century as fresh and vigorous as ever. Like the fabled monsters of old, from whose dissevered neck the blood sprung forth and formed fresh heads, multiplied and indestructible; or, like the weeds, which, extirpated in one place, sprout forth vigorously in another.

In every such case it may be taken for granted that the root of the matter has not been reached, — the error has been exposed, but the truth which lay at the bottom of the error has not been disengaged. Every error is connected with a truth; the truth, being perennial, springs up again as often as circumstances foster it, or call for it; and the seeds of error which lay about the roots spring up again in the form of weeds, as before.

A popular illustration of this may be found
belief in the appearance of the spirits of the de
You may examine the evidence for every such a
apparition; you may demonstrate the improba
you may reduce it to an impossibility; still the
lar feeling will remain: and there is a lurking
stition even among the enlightened, which, i
midst of professions of incredulity, shows itsel
readiness to believe the wildest new tale, if it p
but the semblance of an authentication. Now
truths lie at the root of this superstition. The f
the reality of the spirit-world, and the instin
belief in it. The second is the fact that there ar
tain states of health in which the eye create
objects which it perceives. The death-blow to
superstition is only struck when we have not
proved that men have been deceived, but show
sides, how they came to be deceived; when sc
has explained the optical delusion, and shown the
iological state in which such apparitions become
ble. Ridicule will not do it, — disproof will not
So long as men feel that there is a spirit-world, ar
long as to some the impression is vivid that they
seen it, you spend your rhetoric in vain. You
show the truth that lies below the error.

The principle we gain from this is, that you ca
overthrow falsehood by negation, but by establis
the antagonistic truth. The refutation which is to
must be positive, not negative. It is an endless w
to be uprooting weeds. Plant the ground with wh
some vegetation, and then the juices which w
have otherwise fed rankness will pour themselves
a more vigorous growth; the dwindled weeds

be easily raked out then. It is an endless task to be refuting error. *Plant truth*, and the error will pine away.

The instance to which all this is preliminary is the pertinacious hold which the belief in a human absolving power retains upon mankind. There has, perhaps, never yet been known a religion without such a belief. There is not a savage in the islands of the South Pacific who does not believe that his priest can shield him from the consequences of sin. There was not a people in antiquity who had not dispensers of Divine favor. That same belief passed from Paganism into Romanism. It was exposed at the period of the Reformation. A mighty reaction was felt against it throughout Europe. Apparently, the whole idea of human priesthood was proved, once and forever, to be baseless; human mediation, in every possible form, was vehemently controverted; men were referred back to God as the sole absolver.

Yet still, now again, three centuries after, the belief is as strong as ever. That which we thought dead is alive again, and not likely, it seems, to die. Recent revelations have shown that confession is daily made in the country whose natural manners are most against it — private absolution asked by English men and given by English priests. A fact so significant might lead us well to pause, and ask ourselves whether we have found the true answer to the question. The negation we have got — the vehement denial; we are weary of its reiteration; but the positive truth which lies at the bottom of this craving — where is that? Parliaments and pulpits, senators and clergymen, have vied with each other in the vehemence with which

they declare absolution un-Christian, un-Englis
that is most abominable in the confessional ha
with unsparing and irreverent indelicacy, forced
the public mind. Still, men and women, who
ness and purity are beyond slander's reach, co
crave assurance of forgiveness. How shall w
to such men? Shall we say, "Who is this that
eth blasphemies? Who can forgive sins bu
alone?" Shall we say it is all blasphemy, — a
ous intrusion upon the prerogatives of the O
solver? Well, we may, — it is *popular* to s
ought; but, you will observe, if we speak so,
no more than the Pharisees in this text; we ex
a negation, but a negation is only one side of
Moreover, we have been asserting that for thre
dred years, with small fruits. We keep assertin
cannot give assurance that sin is pardoned; in
words, man cannot absolve; but still the heart
human assurance of forgiveness. What truth ha
got to supply that craving? We shall, the
rather try to fathom the deeps of the positive
which is the true reply to the error; we shall
see whether there is not a real answer to the c
contained in the Redeemer's words, "The S
man hath power on earth to forgive sins."
power is there in human forgiveness? What
absolution mean in the lips of a son of man?
are our questions for to-day. We shall conside
points.

I. The impotency of the negation.

II. The power of the positive truth.

I. The Pharisees denied the efficacy of human

lution; they said, "None can forgive sins, but God only;" that was a negation. What did they effect by their system of negations? They conferred no peace; they produced no holiness. It would be a great error to suppose that the Pharisees were hypocrites in the ordinary sense of the term — that is, pretending to be anxious about religion when they knew that they felt no anxiety. They *were* anxious, in their way. They heard a startling free announcement of forgiveness by a man. To them it appeared license given to sin. If this new teacher, this upstart, — in their own language, "this fellow, of whom every man knew whence he was," — were to go about the length and breadth of the land, telling sinners to be at peace; telling them to forget the past, and to work onwards; bidding men's consciences be at rest, and commanding them not to *fear* the God whom they had offended, but to *trust* in Him — what would become of morality and religion? This presumptuous Absolver would make men careless about both. If the indispensable safeguards of penalty were removed, what remained to restrain men from sin? For the Pharisees had no notion of any other goodness than that which is restrained; they could conceive no goodness free, but only that which is produced by rewards and punishments — law-goodness, law-righteousness; to dread God, not to love and trust Him, was their conception of religion. And this, indeed, is the *ordinary* conception of religion — the ordinary meaning implied to most minds by the word religion. The word religion means, by derivation, restriction or obligation — obligation to do, obligation to avoid. And this is the negative system of the Pharisees — scrupulous avoidance of evil, rather than

positive and free pursuit of excellence. Suc tem never produced anything but barren "*This* is wrong;" "*that* is heresy;" "*that* gerous."

There was another class of men who denied power of absolution. They were called Scr writers — pedants, men of ponderous learni accurate definitions; from being mere transcri the law, they had risen to be its expounders. could define the exact number of yards that m travelled on the Sabbath-day without infringem the law; they could decide, according to the approved theology, the respective importance o duty; they would tell you, authoritatively, whi the *great* commandment of the law. The Scrit man who turns religion into etiquette; his idea is that of a monarch, transgression against whor offence against statute law, and he, the Scribe, i to explain the prescribed conditions upon whi offence may be expiated; he has no idea of adn to the sovereign's presence, except by comp with certain formalities which the Scribe is cc sioned to declare.

There are, therefore, Scribes in all ages. — R Scribes, who distinguish between venial and n sin, and apportion to each its appointed penanc absolution. There are Protestant Scribes, who no idea of God but as an incensed judge, and pres certain methods of appeasing Him — certain pri in consideration of which He is willing to sell fo ness; men who accurately draw the distinction bet the different kinds of faith — faith historical and saving; who bewilder and confuse all natural fe

who treat the natural love of relations as if it were an idolatry as great as bowing down to mammon; who make intelligible distinction between the work that *may* and the work that may *not* be done on the Sabbath-day; who send you into a perilous consideration of the workings of your own feelings, and the examination of your spiritual experiences, to ascertain whether you have the feelings which give you a right to call God a Father. They hate the Romish Scribe as much as the Jewish Scribe hated the Samaritan and called him heretic. But in their way they are true to the spirit of the Scribe.

Now, the result of this is four-fold. Among the tender-minded, despondency; among the vainer, spiritual pride; in the case of the slavish, superstition; with the hard-minded, infidelity. Ponder it well, and you will find these four things rife amongst us: Despondency, Spiritual Pride, Superstition, and Infidelity. In this way we have been going on for many years. In the midst of all this, at last we are informed that the confessional is at work again; whereupon astonishment and indignation are loudly expressed. It is not to be borne that the priests of the Church of England should confess and absolve in private. Yet it is only what might have been expected. With our Evangelicalism, Tractarianism, Scribeism, Pharisaism, we have ceased to front the *living fact*. We are as zealous as Scribes and Pharisees ever were for negatives; but in the mean time human nature, oppressed and overborne, gasping for breath, demands something real and living. It cannot live on controversies. It cannot be fed on protests against heresy, however vehement. We are trying who can protest loudest. Every book, every

journal, rings with warnings. "Beware!" is upon everything. Beware of Rome; beware va; beware of Germany; some danger on eve Satan everywhere — God *nowhere;* everywhe man to be shunned or dreaded — nowhere o loved freely and without suspicion. Is it any if men and women, in the midst of negations, c warn me from the error, but who will guide truth? I want guidance. I am sinful, full of want forgiveness! Absolve me; tell me tha pardoned; help me to believe it. Your quar not help me; if you cannot do *that*, it matte what you *can* do. You have restricted God' and narrowed the path to heaven; you have har religion with so many mysterious questions an bles, that I cannot find the way to God; you terrified me with so many snares and pitfalls on side, that I dare not tread at all. Give me give me human guidance: I want a human arm t on." This is a cry, I believe, becoming daily passionate, and more common. And no wonde all our information, public and private, is to the effect — that the recent converts have found pe Rome; for the secret of the power of Rome is that she grounds her teaching, not on variable fe and correct opinions, but on *facts*. God is not a probable God, but a *fact*. God's forgiveness is feeling, but a *fact;* and a material symbolic fact witness of the invisible one. Rome puts forwa absolution — her false, priestly, magical absolut a visible fact, as a witness of the invisible. An perversion prevails because founded on a truth,

II. The power of the positive truth.

Is it any wonder, if, taught on every side distrust of man, the heart should, by a violent reaction, and by an extravagant confidence in a priest, proclaim that its normal, natural state is not distrust, but trust?

What is forgiveness? — It is God reconciled to us. What is absolution? — It is the authoritative declaration that God is reconciled. Authoritative: that is, a real power of conveying a sense and feeling of forgiveness. It is the power of the Son of man *on earth* to forgive sins. It is man, God's image, representing, by his forgiveness on earth, God's forgiveness in heaven. Now, distinguish God's forgiveness of sin from an arresting of the consequences of sin. When God forgives a sin, it does not follow that He stops its consequences. For example, when He forgives the intemperate man whose health is ruined, forgiveness does not restore his health. Divine pardon does not interfere with the laws of the universe, for it is itself one of those laws. It is a law that penalty follows transgression. Forgiveness will not save from penalty; but it alters the feelings with which the penalty is accepted. Pain inflicted with a surgeon's knife for a man's good is as keen as that which results from the knife of the torturer; but in the one case it is calmly borne, because remedial — in the other, it exasperates, because it is felt to be intended by malevolence. So with the difference between suffering which comes from a sin which we hope God has forgiven, and suffering which seems to fall hot from the hand of an angry God. It is a fearful truth, that so far as we know, at least, the consequences of an act are connected with it indissolubly. Forgiveness does not

arrest them; but, by producing softness and penitence, it transforms them into blessings. God's forgiveness; and absolution is the co to the conscience of the conviction of forgive absolve is to free, to comfort by strengthe afford repose from fear.

Now, it was the way of the Redeemer to pate from sin by the freeness of absolutio dying thief, an hour before a blasphemer, wa ditionally assured; the moment the sinner's changed towards God, He proclaimed that reconciled to him: "This day thou shalt be in Paradise." And hence, speaking humanly, from this absolving tone and spirit, came H drous and unparalleled power with sinful, hearts; hence the life and fresh impulse wh imparted to the being and experience of thos whom He dealt. Hence, the maniac, freed fr legion, sat at his feet, clothed and in his right Hence, the outcast woman, whom human scorn have hardened into brazen effrontery, heari unwonted voice of human sympathy, "washe feet with her tears, and wiped them with the h her head." And this is what we have forgotten have not yet learned to trust the power of rede love; we do not believe in the omnipotence of and the might of an appeal to the better par not the slavish parts, of human nature. Settle your minds, the absolving power is the central of the Gospel. Salvation is unconditional; offer, but *a Gift;* not clogged with condition free as the air we breathe. God welcomes ba prodigal. God loves without money and w

price. To this men reply, gravely, It is dangerous to speak thus; it is perilous to dispense with the safeguards of restriction. Law! law! there is nothing like law — a salutary fear — for making men holy. O, blind Pharisee! had you ever known the spring, the life which comes from feeling *free*, the gush of gratitude with which the heart springs to duty when all chains are shattered, and it stands fearless and true in the Light, and in the Love of God, you would understand that a large, trusting charity, which can throw itself on the better and more generous impulses of a laden spirit, is the safest as well as the most beautiful means of securing obedience.

So far, however, there will not be much objection to the doctrine: it will be admitted that absolution is true in the lips of Christ, because of His Divinity. It will be said He was God, and God speaking on earth is the same thing as God speaking in heaven. No, my brethren, it is *not* the same thing. Christ forgiving on earth is *a new truth* added to that of God's forgiving in heaven. It is not the same truth. The one is forgiveness by Deity; the other is the declaration of forgiveness by Humanity. He bade the palsied man walk, that they might know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. Therefore we proceed a step further. The same power He delegated to His Church which he had exercised Himself. "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted." Now, perhaps, it will be replied to this, that the promise belongs to the apostles; that they were supernaturally gifted to distinguish genuine from feigned repentance, - to absolve, therefore, was their natural

prerogative, — but that we have no right t extends beyond the apostles.

We, therefore, bring the question to a p referring to an instance in which an apostle solve. Let us examine whether he confined rogative to himself. 2 Cor. ii. 10.—"To whon give anything, I forgive also: for to whom I anything for your sakes, forgave I it in the pe Christ."

Observe, now, it is quite true here that the absolved a man whose excommunication he l merly required; but he absolved him because t gregation absolved him; not as a plenipot supernaturally gifted to convey a mysterious l but as himself an organ and representative Church. The power of absolution, therefore, be to the Church, and to the apostle through the C It was a power belonging to *all* Christians; apostle, because he was a Christian, not becau was an apostle. A priestly power, no doubt, b Christ has made all Christians kings and priests.

Now, let us turn again, with this added lig examine the meaning of that expression, "The S man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Mar form of words — not Christ as God, but Christ a of man. It was manifestly said by Him, not sol divine, but rather as human, as the Son of man is, as man. For we may take it as a rule, when calls himself Son of man, He is asserting His H ity. It was said by the High Priest of Humani the name of the race. It was said on the pri that human nature is the reflection of God's na that human love is the image of God's love; and

human forgiveness is the type and assurance of divine forgiveness.

In Christ, Humanity was the perfect type of Deity; and therefore Christ's absolution was always the exact measure and counterpart of God's forgiveness. Herein lies the deep truth of the doctrine of His eternal priesthood — the Eternal Son, the Humanity of the Being of God, the ever Human Mind of God. The Absolver ever lives. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.

But, further than this. In a subordinate, because less perfect degree, the forgiveness of a man, as man, carries with it an absolving power. Who has not felt the load taken from his mind when the hidden guilt, over which he had brooded long, has been acknowledged, and met by forgiving human sympathy, especially at a time when he expected to be treated with coldness and reproof? Who has not felt how such a moment was to him the dawn of a better hope, and how the merciful judgment of some wise and good human being seemed to be the type and the assurance of God's pardon, making it credible? Unconsciously, it may be, but still, in substance, really, I believe some such reasoning as *this* goes on in the whispers of the heart — "He loves me, and has compassion on me — will not God forgive? He, this man, made in God's image, does not think my case hopeless. Well, then, in the larger love of God it is not hopeless." Thus, and only thus, can we understand the *ecclesiastical* act. Absolution, the prerogative of our humanity, is represented by a formal act of the Church.

Much controversy and angry bitterness has bee
on the absolution put by the Church of Engla
the lips of her ministers — I cannot think with
if we try to get at the root of these words of
The priest proclaims forgiveness authoritati
the organ of the congregation — as the voice
Church, in the name of man and God. For
nature represents God. The Church represen
human nature is, and ought to be. The minis
resents the Church. He speaks; therefore in th
of our Godlike human nature. He declares a
fact; he does not create it. There is no magi
absolution; he can no more forgive whom G
not forgiven, by the formula of absolution, or
the pardon of him whom God has absolved,
formula of excommunication, than he can tran
demon into an angel, by the formula of baptis
declares what every one has a right to declare,
lips and by his conduct; but, being a minister,
clares it authoritatively, in the name of every
tian who, by his Christianity, is a priest to Go
specializes what is universal; as, in baptism, h
the universal Sonship on the individual by nam
ing, "The Sonship with which Christ has redeer
men, I hereby proclaim for this child," so by a
tion he specializes the universal fact of the l
God to those who are listening then and there, s
"The Love of God, the Absolver, I authorita
proclaim to be *yours*."

In the Service for the Visitation of the Sic
Church of England puts into the lips of her mi
words quite unconditional: "I absolve thee fr
thy sins." You know that passage is constant

jected to as Romish and superstitious. I would not give up that precious passage. I love the Church of England, because she has dared to claim her inheritance, because she has courage to assert herself as what she ought to be — God's representative on earth. She says to her minister, Stand there before a darkened spirit, on whom the shadows of death have begun to fall; in human flesh and blood, representing the Invisible, with words of human love, making credible the Love Eternal. Say, boldly, I am here to declare, not a perhaps, *but a fact*. I forgive thee in the name of Humanity. And so far as Humanity represents Deity, that forgiveness is a type of God's. She does not put into her minister's lips words of incantation. He cannot bless whom God has not blessed; he cannot curse whom God has not cursed. If the Son of absolution be there, his absolution will rest. If you have ever tried the slow and apparently hopeless task of ministering to a heart diseased, and binding up the wound that *will* bleed afresh, to which no assurances can give comfort, because they are not authoritative, it must have crossed your mind that such a power as that which the Church of England claims, if it were believed, is exactly the remedy you want. You must have felt that even the formula of the Church of Rome would be a blessed power to exercise, could it but once be accepted as a pledge that all the past was obliterated, and that from that moment a free, untainted future lay before the soul,— you must have *felt* that; you must have wished you had dared to *say* it. My whole spirit has absolved my erring brother. Is God less merciful than I? Can I — dare I — say or think it conditionally? Dare I say, I hope? — may I not,

must I not, say, *I know* God has forgiven you? man whose heart has truly bled over anothe and watched another's remorse with pangs as s if the crime had been his own, *has* said it. parent has said it who ever received back a re daughter, and opened out for her a new hope Every mother has said it who ever, by her hope hope for some profligate, protested for a love and wider than that of society. Every man h it who forgave a deep wrong. See, then, *why* a the Church absolves. She only exercises that which belongs to every son of man. If societ Christian, — if society, by its forgiveness and its sion, truly represented the mind of God, — there be no necessity for a Church to speak; but th lution of society and the world does not repres any means, God's forgiveness. Society absolve whom God has *not* absolved — the proud, the the strong, the seducer; society refuses retu acceptance to the seduced, the frail, and the sa tent, whom God has accepted; therefore it is nec that a selected body, through its appointed should do, in the name of man, what man, as does not. The Church is the ideal of Humani represents what God intended man to be — wha is in God's sight, as beheld in Christ by Him; a minister of the Church speaks as the representat that ideal humanity. Church absolution is an nal protest, in the name of God the Absolver, a the false judgments of society.

One thing more. Beware of making this a formula. If absolution be not a living truth, comes a monstrous falsehood; if you take abso

as a mystical gift conveyed to an individual man, called a priest, and mysteriously efficacious in *his* lips, and his *alone*, you petrify a truth into death and unreality. I have been striving to show that absolution is not a Church figment, invented by priestcraft, but a living, blessed, human power. It is a power delegated to you and to me; and just so far as we exercise it lovingly and wisely, in our lives, and with our lips, we help men away from sin; just so far as we do not exercise it, or exercise it falsely, we drive men to Rome. For, if the heart cannot have a truth, it will take a counterfeit of truth. By every magnanimous act, by every free forgiveness with which a pure man forgives, or pleads for mercy, or assures the penitent, he proclaims this truth, that "the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins," — he exhibits the priestly power humanity, — *he does* absolve; let theology say what it will of absolution, he gives peace to the conscience — he is a type and assurance of what God is — he breaks the chains and lets the captive go free.

VI.

[Preached June 9, 1850.]

THE ILLUSIVENESS OF LIFE.

Hebrews xi. 8–10.—"By faith Abraham, when he was calle
out into a place which he should after receive for an inhe
obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. B
he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, d
in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of th
promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose
and maker is God."

Last Sunday we touched upon a thought w
deserves further development. God promised Ca
to Abraham, and yet Abraham never inherited Can
to the last he was a wanderer there; he had no
session of his own in its territory; if he wanted
a tomb to bury his dead, he could only obtain i
purchase. This difficulty is expressly admitted in
text, "In the land of promise he sojourned as
strange country;" he dwelt there in tents, in cha
ful, movable tabernacles, not permanent habitations
had no home there.

It is stated, in all its startling force, in terms
more explicit, in the 7th chapter of the Acts, 5th ve
"And He gave him none inheritance in it, no, no
much as to set his foot on; yet He promised that

would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child."

Now, the surprising point is, that Abraham, deceived as you might almost say, did not complain of it as a deception; he was even grateful for the non fulfilment of the promise; he does not seem to have expected its fulfilment; he did not look for Canaan, but for "a city which had foundations;" his faith appears to have consisted in disbelieving the letter, almost as much as in believing the spirit of the promise.

And herein lies a principle, which, rightly expounded, can help us to interpret this life of ours. God's promises never are fulfilled in the sense in which they seem to have been given. Life is a deception; its anticipations, which are God's promises to the imagination, are never realized; they who know life best, and have trusted God most to fill it with blessings, are ever the first to say that life is a series of disappointments.

And in the spirit of this text we have to say that it is a wise and merciful arrangement which ordains it thus.

The wise and holy do not expect to find it otherwise — would not wish it otherwise; their wisdom consists in disbelieving its promises. To develop this idea would be a glorious task; for to justify God's ways to man, to expound the mysteriousness of our present being, to interpret God, is not this the very essence of the ministerial office? All that I can hope, however, to-day is, not to exhaust the subject, but to furnish hints for thought. Overstatements may be made, illustrations may be inadequate, the new ground of an almost untrodden subject may be torn up too

contains within it. Do not stop to a
whether the subject was satisfactorily work
each man be satisfied to have received
thought which he may develop better for h

I. The deception of life's promise.

II. The meaning of that deception.

Let it be clearly understood, in the firs
promise never was fulfilled. I do not s
ment was delayed. I say it *never* was fulfi
ham had a few feet of earth, obtained by p
beyond that, nothing; he died a stranger a
in the land. Isaac had a little. So small w
hold upon his country, that the last years
were spent in Egypt, and he died a for
strange land. His descendants came into
Canaan, expecting to find it a land flowing
and honey; they found hard work to do
unrest, instead of rest.

During one brief period, in the history of
promise may seem to have been fulfilled;

hausted nor fulfilled by the entrance into Canaan; for he says, "If Joshua had given them rest, then would he not have spoken of another day." Again, in this very chapter, after a long list of Hebrew saints — "These *all* died in faith, not having received the promises." To none, therefore, had the promise been fulfilled. Accordingly, writers on prophecy, in order to get over this difficulty, take for granted that there must be a future fulfilment, because the first was inadequate.

They who believe that the Jews will be restored to their native land expect it on the express ground that Canaan has never been actually and permanently theirs. A certain tract of country — three hundred miles in length, by two hundred in breadth — must be given, or else they think the promise has been broken. To quote the expression of one of the most eloquent of their writers, "If there be nothing yet future for Israel, then the magnificence of the promise has been lost in the poverty of its accomplishment."

I do not quote this to prove the correctness of the interpretation of the prophecy, but as an acknowledgment which may be taken so far as a proof that the promise made to Abraham has never been accomplished.

And such is life's disappointment. Its promise is, you shall have a Canaan; it turns out to be a baseless, airy dream — toil and warfare — nothing that we can call our own; not the land of rest, by any means. But we will examine this in particulars.

1. Our senses deceive us: we begin life with delusion. Our senses deceive us with respect to distance, shape, and color. That which afar off seems oval

turns out to be circular, modified by the p
of distance; that which appears a speck, up
approach becomes a vast body. To the ea
the stars presented the delusion of small la
in space. The beautiful berry proves to be
poisonous; that which apparently moves is
rest; that which seems to be stationary is
ual motion: the earth moves — the sun is
experience is a correction of life's delusions
fication, a reversal of the judgment of th
and all life is a lesson on the falsehood
ances.

2. Our natural anticipations deceive us — I
ral in contradistinction to extravagant exp
Every human life is a fresh one, bright with
will never be realized. There may be diffe
character in these hopes; finer spirits may l
as the arena of successful deeds, the more s
place of personal enjoyment.

With man the turning point of life may
fession — with woman, marriage; the one g
future with the triumphs of intellect, the o
the dreams of affection; but, in every case, l
what any of them expects, but something
would almost seem a satire on existence to
the youth in the outset of his career, flushed
guine, with the aspect of the same being w
nearly done — worn, soberized, covered with
of life, and confessing that its days have
and evil. Where is the land flowing with
honey?

With our affections it is still worse, bec
promise more. Man's affections are but t

nacles of Canaan — the tents of a night; not permanent habitations, even for this life. Where are the charms of character, the perfection, and the purity, and the truthfulness, which seemed so resplendent in our friend? They were only the shape of our conceptions — our creative shaping intellect projected its own fantasies on him: and hence, we outgrow our early friendships; outgrow the intensity of all: we dwell in tents; we never find a home, even in the land of promise. Life is an unenjoyable Canaan, with nothing real or substantial in it.

3. Our expectations, resting on revelation, deceive us. The world's history has turned round two points of hope; one, the *first* — the other, the *second* coming of the Messiah. The magnificent imagery of Hebrew prophecy had described the advent of the Conqueror; He came — "a root out of a dry ground, with no form or comeliness; and when they saw Him there was no beauty in Him that they should desire Him." The victory, predicted in such glowing terms, turned out to be the victory of Submission — the Law of our Humanity, which wins by gentleness and love. The promise in the letter was unfulfilled. For ages the world's hope has been the second advent. The early church expected it in their own day — "We, which are alive, and remain until the coming of our Lord."

The Saviour Himself had said, "This generation shall not pass till all things be fulfilled." Yet the Son of man has never come, or rather He has been ever coming. Unnumbered times the judgment eagles have gathered together over corruption ripe for condemnation. Times innumerable the separation has been made between good and bad. The promise has not been ful-

filled, or it has been fulfilled, but in either ca
pation has been foiled and disappointed.

There are two ways of considering this s
life. One is the way of sentiment; the oth
way of faith. The sentimental way is trite
Saint, sage, sophist, moralist, and preacher,
peated, in every possible image, till there is
new to say, that life is a bubble, a dream, a
a phantasm. The other is the way of faith
cient saints felt as keenly as any moralist coul
brokenness of its promises; they confessed
were strangers and pilgrims here; they said
had here no continuing city; but they did no
fully moralize on this; they said it cheerfully
joiced that it was so. They felt that all wa
they knew that the promise itself had a deep
ing; they looked undauntedly for "a city wh
foundations."

II. The second inquiry, therefore, is the me
this delusiveness.

1. It serves to allure us on. Suppose that
ual promise had been made at first to Israel;
that they had been informed at the outset th
rest is inward; that the promised land is on
in the Jerusalem which is above — not mate
immaterial; — that rude, gross people, yearni
the fleshpots of Egypt — willing to go back into
so as only they might have enough to eat and
— would they have quitted Egypt on such
Would they have begun one single step of
grimage, which was to find its meaning in
pline of ages?

We are led through life as we are allured upon a journey. Could a man see his route before him, — a flat, straight road, unbroken by bush, or tree, or eminence, with the sun's heat burning down upon it, stretched out in dreary monotony, — he could scarcely find energy to begin his task; but the uncertainty of what may be seen beyond the next turn keeps expectation alive. The view that may be seen from yonder summit — the glimpse that may be caught, perhaps, as the road winds round yonder knoll — hopes like these, not far distant, beguile the traveller on from mile to mile, and from league to league.

In fact, life is an education. The object for which you educate your son is to give him strength of purpose, self-command, discipline of mental energies; but you do not reveal to your son this aim of his education; you tell him of his place in his class, of the prizes at the end of the year, of the honors to be given at college.

These are not the true incentives to knowledge; such incentives are not the highest — they are even mean, and partially injurious; yet these mean incentives stimulate and lead on, from day to day, and from year to year, by a process the principle of which the boy himself is not aware of. So does God lead on, through life's unsatisfying and false reward, ever educating: Canaan first; then the hope of a Redeemer; then the millennial glory. Now, what is remarkable in this is, that the delusion continued to the last; they *all* died in faith, not having received the promises; all were hoping up to the very last, and all died in faith — not in realization; for thus God has constituted the human heart. It never will be believed

that this world is unreal. God has mercifu arranged it that the idea of delusion is incr You may tell the boy or girl as you will that lif disappointment; yet, however you may persuade to adopt your *tone*, and catch the language o sentiment, they are both looking forward to bright distant hope — the rapture of the next va or the unknown joys of the next season — and ing into it an energy of expectation which a eternity is only worth. You may tell the man wl received the heart-shock from which in this wo will not recover that life has nothing left; y stubborn heart still hopes on, ever near the — "wealthiest when most undone;" he has reap whirlwind, but he will go on still, till life is over, s the wind.

Now, observe the beautiful result which comes this indestructible power of believing in spite o ure. In the first centuries, the early Christian lieved that the millennial advent was close; they the warning of the apostle, brief and sharp, "The is short." Now, suppose that, instead of this, the seen all the dreary page of Church history unroll suppose that they had known that after two thou years the world would have scarcely spelled out letters of the meaning of Christianity, — where w have been those gigantic efforts, that life spent a the very brink of eternity, which characterize the of the early Church, and which was, after all, only true life of man in time? It is thus that God has on His world. He has conducted it as a father his child, when the path homeward lies over ma dreary league. He suffers him to beguile the tho

of time, by turning aside to pluck now and then a flower, to chase now a butterfly; the butterfly is crushed, the flower fades, but the child is so much nearer home, invigorated and full of health, and scarcely wearied yet.

2. This non-fulfilment of promise fulfils it in a *deeper* way. The account we have given already, were it to end there, would be insufficient to excuse the failure of life's promise; by saying that it allures us, would be really to charge God with deception. Now, life is not deception, but illusion. We distinguish between illusion and delusion. We may paint wood so as to be taken for stone, iron, or marble — this is delusion; but you may paint a picture, in which rocks, trees, and sky, are never mistaken for what they seem, yet produce all the emotion which real rocks, trees, and sky, would produce. This is illusion, and this is the painter's art; never for one moment to deceive by attempted imitation, but to produce a mental state in which the feelings are suggested which the natural objects themselves would create. Let us take an instance drawn from life.

To a child the rainbow is a real thing — substantial and palpable; its limb rests on the side of yonder hill. He believes that he can appropriate it to himself; and when, instead of gems and gold, hid in its radiant bow, he finds nothing but damp mist — cold, dreary drops of disappointment — that disappointment tells that his belief has been delusion.

To the educated man that bow is a blessed illusion, yet it never once deceives; he does not take it for what it is not; he does not expect to make it his own. He feels its beauty as much as the child could feel it;

nay, infinitely more — more even from the fact t
knows that it will be transient; but, beside
beyond this, to him it presents a deeper loveline
knows the laws of light, and the laws of the
soul which gave it being. He has linked it wi
laws of the universe, and with the invisible mi
God; and it brings to him a thrill of awe, and the
of a mysterious, nameless beauty, of which the
did not conceive. It is illusion still; but it h
filled the promise. In the realm of spirit, in the t
of the soul, it is the same. All is illusion; "l
look for a city which hath foundations;" and i
the promise is fulfilled.

And such was Canaan to the Israelites. To
doubtless, it was delusion. They expected t
their reward in a land of milk and honey.
were bitterly disappointed, and expressed their
pointment loudly enough in their murmurs a
Moses, and their rebellion against his succe
But, to others, as to Abraham, Canaan was the l
illusion which never deceived, but forever
before as the type of something more real. And
taking the promise literally, though they dwe
tents, and could not call a foot of land their own
not its beauty theirs? Were not its trellised v
and glorious pastures, and rich olive-fields, ministe
the enjoyment of those who had all in God, th
its milk, and oil, and honey, could not be enjoyed
exclusiveness of appropriation? Yet over and a
and beyond this, there was a more blessed fulfil
of the promise: there was a city which had fou
tions — built and made by God — toward which
anticipation of this Canaan was leading them.

Kingdom of God was forming in their souls, forever disappointing them by the unreal, and teaching them what is spiritual, and belongs to mind and character, alone can be eternal. We will illustrate this principle from the common walks of life. The principle is, that the reward we get is not the reward for which we worked, but a different one — deeper and more permanent. The merchant labors all his life, and the hope which leads him on is perhaps wealth. Well, at sixty years of age he attains wealth; — is that the reward of sixty years of toil? Ten years of enjoyment, when the senses can enjoy no longer, — a country-seat, splendid plate, a noble establishment? O, no! a reward deeper than he dreamed of. Habits of perseverance, a character trained by industry — that is his reward. He was carried on from year to year by, if he were wise, illusion; if he were unwise, delusion; but he reaped a more enduring substance in himself.

Take another instance: the public man, warrior, or statesman, who has served his country, and complains at last, in bitter disappointment, that his country has not fulfilled his expectations in rewarding him, — that is, it has not given him titles, honors, wealth. But titles, honors, wealth — are these the rewards of well-doing? can they reward it? would it be well-doing if they could? To *be* such a man, to have the power of *doing* such deeds, what could be added to that reward by having? This same apparent contradiction, which was found in Judaism, subsists too in Christianity. We will state it in the words of an apostle: "Godliness is profitable for all things; having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." Now for the fulfilment: "If in this life only we have

hope in Christ, then are we of all men most mise
Godliness is profitable; but its profit, it appea
sists in finding that all is loss; yet in this w
teach your son. You will tell him that if he
good all men will love him. You say that "H
is the best policy," yet in your heart of hea
know that you are leading him on by a de
Christ was good. Was He loved by all? In
tion as he, your son, is like Christ, *he will be lo*
by the many, but by the few. Honesty is *not* th
policy; the commonplace honesty of the marke
may be, — the vulgar honesty which goes no
than paying debts accurately; but that trans
Christian honesty of a life which in every act i
ing witness to the truth, that is not the way to
in life, — the reward of such a life is the Cross.
you were right in teaching your son this; yo
him what was true — truer than he could compr
It *is* better to be honest and good; better than
know or dream; better even in this life; better
much as *being* good is better than *having* good.
in a rude, coarse way, you must express the blesse
on a level with his capacity; you must state the
in a way which he will inevitably interpret fa
The true interpretation nothing but experienc
teach.

And this is what God does. His promises are
though illusive; far truer than we at first take th
be. We work for a mean, low, sensual happine
the while He is leading us on to a spiritual blessed
unfathomably deep. This is the life of faith.
live by faith, and not by sight. We do not p
that all is disappointment — the dreary creed of

mentalism; but we preach that *nothing* here is disappointment, if rightly understood. We do not comfort the poor man by saying that the riches that he has not now he will have hereafter, — the difference between himself and the man of wealth being only this, that the one has for time what the other will have for eternity; but what we say is, that that which you have failed in reaping here, you never will reap, if you expected the harvest of Canaan. God has no Canaan for His own; no milk and honey for the luxury of the senses; for the city which hath foundations is built in the soul of man. He in whom Godlike character dwells has all the universe for his own. "All things," saith the apostle, "are yours: whether life or death, or things present, or things to come: if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the *promise*."

VII.

[Preached June 23, 1850.]

THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.

2 Corinthians v. 14, 15. — "For the love of Christ constrain
because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were
and that he died for all, that they which live should not h
live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them,
again."

It may be that in reading these verses some
have understood them in a sense foreign to that
apostle. It may have seemed that the argumer
thus: — Because Christ died upon the Cross f
therefore all must have been in a state of sp
death before; and if they were asked what doc
are to be elicited from this passage they would
"The doctrine of universal depravity, and the
straining power of the gratitude due to Him wh
to redeem us from it." There is, however, in th
place, this fatal objection to such an interpret
that the death here spoken of is used in two dia
cally opposite senses. In reference to Christ,
literal; in reference to all, death spiritual. No
the thought of St. Paul, the death of Christ was al
viewed as liberation from the power of evil: "in
He died, He died unto sin once;" and again, "he
is dead is freed from sin." The literal death, the
one clause, means *freedom* from sin; the spiritual d

of the next is *slavery* to it. Wherein, then, lies the cogency of the apostle's reasoning? How does it follow that, because Christ died to evil, all before that must have died to God? Of course that doctrine is true in itself, but it is *not* the doctrine of the text.

In the next place, the ambiguity belongs only to the English word — it is impossible to make the mistake in the original: the word which stands for *were* is a word which does not imply a continued state, but must imply a single finished act. It cannot, by any possibility, imply that before the death of Christ men *were* in a state of death; it can only mean they became dead at the moment when Christ died. If you read it thus, the meaning of the English will emerge — "if one died for all, then all died;" and the apostle's argument runs thus, that if one acts as the representative of all, then his act is the act of all. If the ambassador of a nation makes reparation in a nation's name, or does homage for a nation, that reparation, or that homage, is the nation's act; — if *one* did it *for* all, then *all* did it. So that, instead of inferring that because Christ died for all, therefore before that all were dead to God, his natural inference is that therefore all are now dead to sin. Once more, the conclusion of the apostle is exactly the reverse of that which this interpretation attributes to him: he does not say that Christ died in order that men might *not* die, but exactly for this very purpose, that they *might*; and this death he represents in the next verse by an equivalent expression — the life of unselfishness: "that they which live might henceforth live not unto themselves." The "dead" of the first verse are "they that live" of the second.

The form of thought finds its exact paralle
mans vi. 10, 11. Two points claim our attenti

I. The vicarious sacrifice of Christ.

II. The influence of that sacrifice on man.

I. The vicariousness of the sacrifice is im
the word "for." A vicarious act is an act c
another. When the Pope calls himself the v
Christ, he implies that he acts for Christ. T
or viceroy of a kingdom is one who acts for th
—a vicar's act, therefore, is virtually the act
principal whom he represents; so that, if th
doctrine were true, when the vicar of Christ
Christ has pardoned. When the viceroy of a k
has published a proclamation, or signed a tre
sovereign himself is bound by those acts.

The truth of the expression *for all* is conta
this fact, that Christ is the representative of hu
—properly speaking, the reality of human
This is the truth contained in the emphatic expr
"Son of man." What Christ did *for* humanit
done by humanity, because in the name of hur
For a truly vicarious act does not supersede th
cipal's duty of performance, but rather impli
acknowledges it. Take the case from which thi
word of vicar has received its origin. In the c
nastic times, when the revenues of a cathedral or
fell to the lot of a monastery, it became the d
that monastery to perform the religious services
cure. But, inasmuch as the monastery was a
rate body, they appointed one of their number,
they denominated their vicar, to discharge those
for them. His service did not supersede thei

was a perpetual and standing acknowledgment that they, as a whole and individually, were under the obligation to perform it. The act of Christ is the act of humanity — that which all humanity is bound to do. His righteousness does not supersede our righteousness, nor does His sacrifice supersede our sacrifice. It is the representation of human life and human sacrifice — vicarious for all, yet binding upon all.

That He died for all is true —

1. Because He was the victim of the sin of all. In the peculiar phraseology of St. Paul, He died unto sin. He was the victim of sin — He died by sin. It is the appalling mystery of our redemption that the Redeemer took the attitude of subjection to evil. There was scarcely a form of evil with which Christ did not come in contact, and by which He did not suffer. He was the victim of false friendship and ingratitude, the victim of bad government and injustice. He fell a sacrifice to the vices of all classes — to the selfishness of the rich, and the fickleness of the poor. Intolerance, formalism, scepticism, hatred of goodness, were the foes which crushed Him.

In the proper sense of the word, He was a victim. He did not adroitly wind through the dangerous forms of evil, meeting it with expedient silence. Face to face, and front to front, He met it, rebuked it, and defied it; and just as truly as he is a voluntary victim whose body opposing the progress of the car of Juggernaut is crushed beneath its monstrous wheels, was He a victim to the world's sin: because pure, He was crushed by impurity; because just, and real, and true, He waked up the rage of injustice, hypocrisy, and falsehood.

Now, this sin was the sin of all. Here ari once a difficulty: it seems to be most unnatu assert that in any one sense He was the sacrif the sin of all. We did not betray Him — that w das' act; Peter denied Him, Thomas doubted, pronounced sentence — it must be a figment t that these were our acts; we did not watch Hi the Pharisees, nor circumvent Him like the S and lawyers; — by what possible sophistry can involved in the complicity of that guilt? The s of New Zealand, who never heard of Him, the le Egyptian and the voluptuous Assyrian, who die fore He came — how was it the sin of all?

The reply that is often given to this query is derfully unreal. It is assumed that Christ was scious, by His Omniscience, of the sins of all manl that the duplicity of the child, and the crime o assassin, and every unholy thought that has passed through a human bosom, were present to mind in that awful hour, as if they were His This is utterly unscriptural. Where is the single from which it can be, except by force, extracted? sides this, it is fanciful and sentimental; and agai is dangerous, for it represents the whole atonemen a fictitious and shadowy transaction. There is a n tal state in which men have felt the burthen of which they did not commit. There have been c in which men have been mysteriously excruciated v the thought of having committed the unpardon sin. But to represent the mental phenomena of Redeemer's mind as in any way resembling this,- say that His conscience was oppressed with the sponsibility of sins which He had not committed,-

to confound a state of sanity with the delusions of a half-lucid mind, and the workings of a healthy conscience with those of one unnatural and morbid.

There is a way, however, much more appalling and much more true, in which this may be true, without resorting to any such fanciful hypothesis. Sin has a great power in this world; it gives laws like those of a sovereign, which bind us all, and to which we are all submissive. There are current maxims in church and state, in society, in trade, in law, to which we yield obedience. For this obedience every one is responsible. For instance, in trade, and in the profession of law, every one is the servant of practices the rectitude of which his heart can only half approve, — every one complains of them, yet all are involved in them. Now, when such sins reach their climax, as in the case of national bankruptcy or an unjust acquittal, there may be some who are, in a special sense, the actors in the guilt; but, evidently, for the bankruptcy each member of the community is responsible in that degree, and so far as he himself acquiesced in the duplicities of public dealing; every careless juror, every unrighteous judge, every false witness, has done his part in the reduction of society to that state in which the monster injustice has been perpetrated. In the riot of a tumultuous assembly by night, a house may be burnt, or a murder committed. In the eye of the law, all who are aiding and abetting there are each in his degree responsible for that crime; there may be difference in guilt, from the degree in which he is guilty who, with his own hand, perpetrated the deed, to that of him who merely joined the rabble from mischievous curiosity — degrees from that of wilful mur-

at of more or less excusable homicide.
were declared by the Saviour to be gu
d of Zacharias, the blood of righteous
l the saints and prophets who fell befo
But how were the Pharisees guilty?
sepulchres of the prophets, they honou
ored them; but they were guilty, in that they
hren of those that slew the prophets — ob
nse, that they inherited their *spirit;* th
the good, in the form in which it showed
day, just as their fathers opposed the for
ed to theirs; therefore He said that they bel
to the same confederacy of evil, and that the gu
the blood of all who had been slain should rest o
generation. Similarly we are guilty of the dea
Christ. If you have been a false friend, a sce
cowardly disciple, a formalist, selfish, an oppos
goodness, an oppressor, whatever evil you have
in that degree and so far you participate in the c
which the Just One fell a victim — you are one o
mighty rabble which cried, "Crucify Him, C
Him." For your sin He died; His blood lies at
threshold.

Again, He died for all, in that His sacrifice repre
the sacrifice of all. We have heard of the doctri
"imputed righteousness;" it is a theological ex
sion to which meanings foolish enough are some
attributed, but it contains a very deep truth, wh
shall be our endeavor to elicit.

Christ is the realized idea of our humanity.
God's idea of man completed. There is every d
ence between the ideal and the actual — between
a man aims to be and what he is; a differenc

tween the race as it is, and the race as it existed in God's creative idea when He pronounced it very good.

In Christ, therefore, God beholds humanity; in Christ He sees perfected every one in whom Christ's spirit exists in germ. He to whom the possible is actual, to whom what will be already *is*, sees all things *present*, — gazes on the imperfect, and sees it in its perfection. Let me venture an illustration. He who has never seen the vegetable world except in Arctic regions has but a poor idea of the majesty of vegetable life, — a microscopic red moss tinting the surface of the snow, a few stunted pines, and here and there perhaps a dwindled oak; but to the botanist, who has seen the luxuriance of vegetation in its tropical magnificence, all that wretched scene presents another aspect; to him those dwarfs are the representatives of what might be, nay, what has been in a kindlier soil and a more genial climate; he fills up, by his conception, the miserable actuality presented by those shrubs, and attributes to them — imputes, that is, to them — the majesty of which the undeveloped germ exists already. Now, the difference between those trees seen in themselves, and seen in the conception of their nature's perfectness, which has been previously realized, is the difference between man seen in himself and seen in Christ. We are feeble, dwarfish stunted specimens of humanity. Our best resolves are but withered branches, our holiest deeds unripe and blighted fruit; but, to the Infinite Eye, who sees in the perfect One the type and assurance of that which shall be, this dwindled humanity of ours is divine and glorious. Such are we in the sight of God the Father as is the very Son of God Himself. This is what theologians

—at least, the wisest of them — meant by "imp
righteousness." I do not mean that all who l
written or spoken on the subject had this concep
of it, but I believe they who thought truly meant t
they did not suppose that, in imputing righteousn
there was a kind of figment, a self-deception in
mind of God: they did not mean that, by an ac
will, He chose to consider that every act which Cl
did was done by us; that He imputed or reckone
us the baptism in Jordan, and the victory in the
derness, and the agony in the garden, or that He
lieved, or acted as if He believed, that when Cl
died each one of us died; but He saw humanity
mitted to the law of self-sacrifice, — in the light of
idea He beholds us as perfect, and is satisfied. In
sense the apostle speaks of those that are imperf
yet "by one offering He hath perfected forever t
that are sanctified." It is true, again, that He died
us, in that we present His sacrifice as ours. The va
of the death of Christ consisted in the surrender
self-will. In the fortieth Psalm, the value of ev
other kind of sacrifice being first denied, the wo
follow, "then said I, Lo, I come, to do thy will
God." The profound idea contained, therefore, in
death of Christ, is the duty of self-surrender.

But, in *us*, that surrender scarcely deserves
name, — even to use the word self-sacrifice covers
with a kind of shame. Then it is, that there is
almost boundless joy in acquiescing in the life a
death of Christ, recognizing it as ours, and represe
ing it to ourselves and God as what we aim at. If
cannot understand how, in this sense, it can be a s
rifice for us, we may partly realize it by rememberi

the joy of feeling how art and nature realize for us what we cannot realize for ourselves. It is recorded of one of the world's gifted painters, that he stood before the masterpiece of the great genius of his age, — one which he could never hope to equal, nor even rival, — and yet the infinite superiority, so far from crushing him, only elevated his feeling, for he saw realized those conceptions which had floated before him dim and unsubstantial: in every line and touch he felt a spirit immeasurably superior, yet kindred, and is reported to have exclaimed, with dignified humility, "And I, too, am a painter!" Or, again, we must all have felt, when certain effects in nature, combinations of form and color, have been presented to us, our own idea speaking in intelligible and yet celestial language; when, for instance, the long bars of purple, "edged with intolerable radiance," seemed to float in a sea of pale, pure green; when the whole sky seemed to reel with thunder; when the night wind moaned. It is wonderful how the most commonplace men and women — beings who, as you would have thought, had no conception that rose beyond a commercial speculation, or a fashionable entertainment — are elevated by such scenes; how the slumbering grandeur of their nature wakes, and acknowledges kindred with the sky and storm. "I cannot speak," they would say, "the feelings which are in me; I have had emotions, aspirations, thoughts, — I cannot put them into words. Look there! listen now to the storm! That is what I meant, only I never could say it out till now." Thus do art and nature speak for us, and thus do we adopt them as our own. This is the way in which His righteousness becomes righteousness for us. This is the

way in which the heart presents to God the sac
of Christ. Gazing on that perfect Life, we, as it v
say, "That is my religion, that is my righteousne
what I want to be, which I am not; that is my
ing, my life as I would wish to give it, — freely
not checked, entire and perfect." So the old prop
their hearts big with unutterable thoughts, sear
"what or what manner of time the spirit of C
which was in them did signify, when it testified be
hand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the g
which should follow;" and so with us, until it pa
into prayer: "My Saviour, fill up the blurred
blotted sketch which my clumsy hand has drawn
divine life, with the fulness of Thy perfect picture
feel the beauty which I cannot realize: — robe m
thine unutterable purity:

'Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.'"

II. The influence of that sacrifice on man is
introduction of the principle of self-sacrifice into
nature, — "then were all dead." Observe, again,
He died that we might not die, but that in His de
we might be dead, and that in His sacrifice we mi
become each a sacrifice to God. Moreover, t
death is identical with life. They who, in the f
sentence, are called dead, are in the second den
inated "they who live." So, in another place, "I
crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live;" dea
therefore — that is, the sacrifice of self — is equi
lent to life. Now, this rests upon a profound tru
The death of Christ was a representation of the l
of God. To me this is the profoundest of all truth

that the whole of the life of God is the sacrifice of self. God is Love: love is sacrifice — to give rather than to receive — the blessedness of self-giving. If the life of God were not such, it would be a falsehood to say that God is Love: for, even in our human nature, that which seeks to enjoy all, instead of giving all, is known by a very different name from that of love. All the life of God is a flow of this divine self-giving charity. Creation itself is sacrifice — the self-imparta-tion of the divine Being. Redemption, too, is sacrifice, else it could not be love: for which reason we will not surrender one iota of the truth that the death of Christ was the sacrifice of God — the manifestation once in time of that which is the eternal law of His life.

If man, therefore, is to rise into the life of God, he must be absorbed into the spirit of that sacrifice — he must die with Christ, if he would enter into his proper life. For sin is the withdrawing into self and egotism, out of the vivifying life of God, which alone is our true life. The moment the man sins, he dies. Know we not how awfully true that sentence is, "Sin revived, and I died"? The vivid life of sin is the death of the man. Have we never felt that our true existence has absolutely in that moment disappeared, and that we are not?

I say, therefore, that real human life is a perpetual completion and repetition of the sacrifice of Christ — "all are dead;" the explanation of which follows, "to live not to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again." This is the truth which lies at the bottom of the Romish doctrine of the mass. Rome asserts that in the mass a true and proper sacrifice is

offered up for the sins of all—that the offeri
Christ is forever repeated. To this Protestantis
objected, vehemently, that there is but one of
once offered—an objection in itself entirely tru
the Romish doctrine contains a truth which it
importance to disengage from the gross and ma
form with which it has been overlaid. Let us
St. Paul: "I fill up that which is behindhand c
sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His body's
which is the Church." Was there, then, some
behindhand of Christ's sufferings remaining u
pleted, of which the sufferings of Paul could
any sense the complement? He says there
Could the sufferings of Paul for the Church in
form or correct expression be said to eke out the
ferings that were complete? In one sense it is
to say that there is one offering once offered *for*
But it is equally true to say that that one offerin
valueless, except so far as it is completed and repe
in the life and self-offering *of* all. This is the C
tian's sacrifice. Not mechanically completed in
miserable materialism of the mass, but spirituall
the life of all in whom the Crucified lives. The sa
fice of Christ is done over again in every life whic
lived, not to self, but to God.

Let one concluding observation be made—s
denial, self-sacrifice, self-surrender! Hard doctri
and impossible! Whereupon, in silent hours,
sceptically ask, Is this possible? is it natural? I
preacher and moralist say what they will, I am
here to sacrifice myself for others. God sent me h
for happiness, not misery. Now, introduce one s
tence of this text of which we have as yet said no

ing, and the dark doctrine becomes illuminated — "the *love* of Christ constrain th us." Self-denial, for the sake of self-denial, does no good; self-sacrifice for its own sake is no religious act at all. If you give up a meal for the sake of showing power over self, or for the sake of self-discipline, it is the most miserable of all delusions. You are not more religious in doing this than before. This is mere self-culture; and self-culture, being occupied forever about self, leaves you only in that circle of self from which religion is to free you; but to give up a meal that one you love may have it, is properly a religious act — no hard and dismal duty, because made easy by affection. To bear pain for the sake of bearing it has in it no moral quality at all; but to bear it rather than surrender truth, or in order to save another, is positive enjoyment, as well as ennobling to the soul. Did you ever receive even a blow meant for another in order to shield that other? Do you not know that there was actual pleasure in the keen pain far beyond the most rapturous thrill of nerve which could be gained from pleasure in the midst of painlessness? Is not the mystic yearning of love expressed in words most purely thus, Let me suffer for him?

This element of love is that which makes this doctrine an intelligible and blessed truth. So sacrifice alone, bare and unrelieved, is ghastly, unnatural, and dead, but self-sacrifice, illuminated by love, is warmth and life; it is the death of Christ, the life of God, the blessedness and only proper life of man.

VIII.

[Preached June 30, 1850.]

THE POWER OF SORROW.

2 Corinthians vii. 9, 10. — "Now I rejoice, not that ye we sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were ma after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

That which is chiefly insisted on in this v the distinction between sorrow and repentanc grieve over sin is one thing, to repent of it is ar

The apostle rejoiced, not that the Corin sorrowed, but that they sorrowed unto repen Sorrow has two results: it may end in spiritu or in spiritual death; and, in themselves, one of is as natural as the other. Sorrow may produc kinds of reformation: a transient, or a permanen — an alteration in habits, which, originating in em will last so long as that emotion continues, and after a few fruitless efforts, be given up — a repen which will be repented of; or, again, a perm change, which will be reversed by no after thoug a repentance not to be repented of. Sorrow itself, therefore, a thing neither good nor bad value depends on the spirit of the person on wh falls. Fire will inflame straw, soften iron, or h

clay; its effects are determined by the object with which it comes in contact. Warmth develops the energies of life, or helps the progress of decay. It is a great power in the hot-house, a great power also in the coffin; it expands the leaf, matures the fruit, adds precocious vigor to vegetable life; and warmth, too, develops, with ten-fold rapidity, the weltering process of dissolution. So, too, with sorrow. There are spirits in which it develops the seminal principle of life; there are others in which it prematurely hastens the consummation of irreparable decay. Our subject, therefore, is the two-fold power of sorrow.

I. The fatal power of the sorrow of the world.

II. The life-giving power of the sorrow that is after God.

I. The simplest way in which the sorrow of the world works death is seen in the effect of mere regret for worldly loss. There are certain advantages with which we come into the world - youth, health, friends, and sometimes property. So long as these are continued we are happy; and, because happy, fancy ourselves very grateful to God. We bask in the sunshine of His gifts, and this pleasant sensation of summing ourselves in life we call religion; that state in which we all are before sorrow comes, to test the temper of the metal of which our souls are made, when the spirits are unbroken and the heart buoyant, when a fresh morning is to a young heart what it is to the skylark. The exuberant burst of joy seems a spontaneous hymn to the Father of all blessing, like the matin carol of the bird; but this is not religion; it is the instinctive utterance of happy feeling, having as little

of moral character in it, in the happy human as in the happy bird. Nay, more; the religion is only sunned into being by happiness is a susp thing; having been warmed by joy, it will b cold when joy is over; and then, when these ble are removed, we count ourselves hardly treated we had been defrauded of a right; rebellious feelings come; then it is you see people b bitter, spiteful, discontented. At every step i solemn path of life, something must be mourned will come back no more; the temper that w smooth becomes rugged and uneven; the benevo that expanded upon all narrows into an ever-dwir selfishness — we are alone; and then that deat loneliness deepens as life goes on. The course o is downwards, and he moves with slow and ever solitary steps, down to the dark silence, the silen the grave. This is the death of heart; the sorro the world has worked death.

Again, there is a sorrow of the world, when s grieved for in a worldly spirit. There are two v of sin: in one it is looked upon as wrong; in other as producing loss — loss, for example, of acter. In such cases, if character could be presei before the world, grief would not come; but paroxysms of misery fall upon our proud spirit w our guilt is made public. The most distinct inst we have of this is in the life of Saul. In the m of his apparent grief, the thing still uppermost that he had forfeited his kingly character: almost only longing was, that Samuel should honor him be his people. And hence it comes to pass that o remorse and anguish only begin with exposure.

cide takes place, not when the act of wrong is done, but when the guilt is known; and hence, too, many a one becomes hardened who would otherwise have remained tolerably happy; in consequence of which we blame the exposure, not the guilt. We say, If it had been hushed up, all would have been well; that the servant who robbed his master was ruined by taking away his character; and that if the sin had been passed over, repentance might have taken place, and he might have remained a respectable member of society. Do not think so. It is quite true that remorse was produced by exposure, and that the remorse was fatal: the sorrow which worked death arose from that exposure, and so far exposure may be called the cause: had it never taken place, respectability, and comparative peace, might have continued; but outward respectability is not change of heart.

It is well known that the corpse has been preserved for centuries in the iceberg, or in antiseptic peat; and that when atmospheric air was introduced to the exposed surface, it crumbled into dust. Exposure worked dissolution, but it only manifested the death which was already there. So, with sorrow, it is not the living heart which drops to pieces, or crumbles into dust, when it is revealed. Exposure did not work death in the Corinthian sinner, but life.

There is another form of grief for sin, which the apostle would not have rejoiced to see; it is when the hot tears come from pride. No two tones of feeling, apparently similar, are more unlike than that in which Saul exclaimed, "I have played the fool exceedingly," and that in which the Publican cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The charge of folly brought

against one's self only proves that we feel bitter having lost our own self-respect. It is a humil to have forfeited the idea which a man had form his own character — to find that the very exce on which he prided himself is the one in whi has failed. If there were a virtue for which Sau conspicuous, it was generosity; yet it was exac this point of generosity in which he discovered self to have failed, when he was overtaken o mountain, and his life spared by the very man v he was hunting to the death, with feelings o meanest jealousy. Yet there was no real repen there; there was none of that in which a man i of state and pomp. Saul could still rejoice in splendor; go about complaining of himself to Ziphites, as if he was the most ill-treated and fi less of mankind; he was still jealous of his re tion, and anxious to be well thought of. Quit ferent is the tone in which the Publican, who himself a sinner, asked for mercy. He heard the tumelious expression of the Pharisee, "this Publi With no resentment, he meekly bore it as a m naturally to be taken for granted — "he did n much as lift up his eyes to heaven;" he was worm which turns in agony, but not revenge, the foot which treads it into the dust.

Now, this sorrow of Saul's, too, works death merit can restore self-respect; when once a ma found himself out, he cannot be deceived again. heart is as a stone: a speck of canker corrodes spreads within. What on this earth remains but less sorrow, for him who has ceased to respect self, and has no God to turn to?

II. The divine power of sorrow.

1. It works repentance. By repentance is meant, in Scripture, change of life, alteration of habits, renewal of heart. This is the aim and meaning of all sorrow. The consequences of sin are meant to wean from sin. The penalty annexed to it is, in the first instance, corrective, not penal. Fire burns the child, to teach it one of the truths of this universe — the property of fire to burn. The first time it cuts its hand with a sharp knife, it has gained a lesson which it never will forget. Now, in the case of pain, this experience is seldom, if ever, in vain. There is little chance of a child forgetting that fire will burn, and that sharp steel will cut; but the moral lessons contained in the penalties annexed to wrong-doing are just as truly intended, though they are by no means so unerring in enforcing their application. The fever in the veins and the headache which succeed intoxication are meant to warn against excess. On the first occasion they are simply corrective; in every succeeding one, they assume more and more a penal character in proportion as the conscience carries with them the sense of ill-desert.

Sorrow, then, has done its work when it deters from evil; in other words, when it works repentance. In the sorrow of the world, the obliquity of the heart towards evil is not cured; it seems as if nothing cured it; heartache and trials come in vain; the history of life at last is what it was at first. The man is found erring where he erred before; the same course, begun with the certainty of the same desperate end which has taken place so often before.

They have reaped the whirlwind, but they will again

sow the wind. Hence I believe that life-giving row is less remorse for that which is irreparable anxiety to save that which remains. The sorrow ends in death hangs in funeral weeds over the chres of the past. Yet the present does not be more wise. Not one resolution is made more firm one habit more holy. Grief is all. Whereas so avails *only* when the past is converted into experi and from failure lessons are learned which never a be forgotten.

2. Permanence of alteration; for, after all, a st reformation is a more decisive test of the valu mourning than depth of grief.

The susceptibility of emotion varies with ind uals. Some men feel intensely, others suffer keenly; but this is constitutional, belonging to vous temperament, rather than moral character. is the characteristic of the divine sorrow, that it repentance "not repented of;" no transient, sh lived resolutions, but sustained resolve.

And the beautiful law is, that in proportion as repentance increases the grief diminishes. "I rejoic says Paul, that "I made you sorry, though it were *for a time.*" Grief for a time, repentance forev And few things more signally prove the wisdom this apostle than his way of dealing with this grief the Corinthian. He tried no artificial means of inte ifying it — did not urge the duty of dwelling upon magnifying it, nor even of gauging and examining So soon as grief had done its work, the apostle v anxious to dry useless tears — he even feared l haply such an one should be swallowed up with ov much sorrow. "A true penitent," says Mr. Newm

never forgives himself." O, false estimate of the Gospel of Christ, and of the heart of man! A proud remorse does not forgive itself the forfeiture of its own dignity; but it is the very beauty of the penitence which is according to God, that at last the sinner, realizing God's forgiveness, does learn to forgive himself. For what other purpose did St. Paul command the Church of Corinth to give ecclesiastical absolution, but in order to afford a symbol and assurance of the Divine pardon, in which the guilty man's grief should not be overwhelming, but that he should become reconciled to himself? What is meant by the Publican's going *down to his house* justified, but that he felt at peace with himself and God?

3. It is sorrow with God — here called godly sorrow; in the margin, sorrowing according to God.

God sees sin not in its consequences, but in itself; a thing infinitely evil, even if the consequences were happiness to the guilty instead of misery. So sorrow according to God is to see sin as God sees it. The grief of Peter was as bitter as that of Judas. He went out and wept bitterly; how bitterly, none can tell but they who have learned to look on sin as God does. But in Peter's grief there was an element of hope; and that sprung precisely from this — that he saw God in it all. Despair of self did not lead to despair of God.

This is the great, peculiar feature of this sorrow: God is there, accordingly self is less prominent. It is not a microscopic self-examination, nor a mourning in which self is ever uppermost; — *my* character gone; the greatness of *my* sin; the forfeiture of *my* salvation. The thought of God absorbs all that. I believe

ng of true penitence would express its
ords as these: — There *is* a righteou
I have not attained it. There is a p
ove, and a beauty, though my life ex
n it. In that I can rejoice. Of that I ca
surpassing loveliness. My doings? The
less, — I cannot endure to think of them.
inking of them. I have something else to
There, there — in that Life I see it. And s
n — gazing not on what he is, but on wh
to be — dares, in penitence, to say, That
s is mine; dares, even when the recolle
sin is most vivid and most poignant, to say
er, thinking less of himself than of God, and
rowing as it were with God, "Lord, Thou kno
all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee."

IX.

[Preached August 4, 1850.]

SENSUAL AND SPIRITUAL EXCITEMENT

Ephesians v. 17, 18. — "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

There is evidently a connection between the different branches of this sentence, — for ideas cannot be properly contrasted which have not some connection, — but what that connection is, is not at first sight clear. It almost appears like a profane and irreverent juxtaposition to contrast fulness of the Spirit with fulness of wine. Moreover, the structure of the whole context is antithetical. Ideas are opposed to each other in pairs of contraries: for instance, "fools" is the exact opposite to "wise;" "unwise," as opposed to "understanding," its proper opposite.

And here, again, there must be the same true antithesis between drunkenness and spiritual fulness. The propriety of this opposition lies in the intensity of feeling produced in both cases. There is one intensity of feeling produced by stimulating the senses; another, by vivifying the spiritual life within. The one commences with impulses from without, the other is guarded by forces from within. Here, then, is the

similarity, and here the dissimilarity, which con
the propriety of the contrast. One is ruin, the
salvation. One degrades, the other exalts.

This contrast, then, is our subject for to-day.

I. The effects are similar. On the day of
cost, when the first influences of the Spirit des
on the early Church, the effects resembled in
tion. They were full of the Spirit, and mocki
standers said, "These men are full of new w
for they found themselves elevated into the e
of a life higher than their own, possessed of p
which they could not control; they spoke incohe
and irregularly — to the most part of those asser
unintelligibly.

Now, compare with this the impression pro
upon savage nations, — suppose those early ag
which the spectacle of intoxication was presente
the first time. They saw a man under the infl
of a force different from, and in some respects
rior to, their own. To them the bacchanal appea
being half inspired; his frenzy seemed a thing
reverence and awe, rather than for horror and dis
the spirit which possessed him must be, they thou
divine; they deified it, worshipped it under diffe
names, as a god; even to a clearer insight the ef
are wonderfully similar. It is almost proverbial an
soldiers that the daring produced by wine is e
mistaken for the self-devotion of a brave heart.

The play of imagination in the brain of the op
eater is as free as that of genius itself, and the c
tions produced in that state by the pen or pencil a
wildly beautiful as those owed to the nobler influen

In years gone by, the oratory of the statesman in the senate has been kindled by semi-intoxication, when his noble utterances were set down by his auditors to the inspiration of patriotism.

It is this very resemblance which deceives the drunkard; he is led on by his feelings, as well as by his imagination. It is not the sensual pleasure of the glutton that fascinates him; it is those fine thoughts, and those quickened sensibilities, which were excited in that state, which he is powerless to produce out of his own being, or by his own powers, and which he expects to reproduce by the same means. The experience of our first parent is repeated in him: at the very moment when he expects to find himself as the gods, knowing good and evil, he discovers that he is unexpectedly degraded, his health wrecked, and his heart demoralized. Hence it is almost as often the finer as the baser spirits of our race which are found the victims of such indulgence. Many will remember, while I speak, the names of the gifted of their species, the degraded men of genius, who were the victims of these deceptive influences: the half-inspired painter, poet, musician, who began by soothing opiates to calm the over-excited nerves, or stimulate the exhausted brain, who mistook the sensation for somewhat half divine, and became, morally and physically, wrecks of manhood, degraded even in their mental conceptions. It was, therefore, no mere play of words which induced the apostle to bring these two things together. That which might else seem irreverent appears to have been a deep knowledge of human nature; he contrasts, because his rule was to distinguish two things which are easily mistaken for each other.

The second point of resemblance is the neces intense feeling. We have fulness — fulness, it produced by outward stimulus, or else by an ing of the Spirit. What we want is life, "m and fuller;" to escape from monotony, to ge from the life of mere routine and habits, to f we are alive — with more of surprise and wake in our existence; to have less of the gelid, tortoise-like existence; "to feel the years befor to be consciously existing.

Now, this desire lies at the bottom of many of life, which are apparently as diverse as po It constitutes the fascination of the gambler' Money is not what he wants; — were he possess thousands to-day, he would risk them all to-morro but it is that, being perpetually on the brink of mous wealth and utter ruin, he is compelled to r at every moment the possibility of the extrem life. Every moment is one of feeling. This, too stitutes the charm of all those forms of life in v the gambling feeling is predominant — where a of skill is blended with a mixture of chance. If ask the statesman why it is that, possessed as he wealth, he quits his princely home for the dark me olis, he would reply, "That he loves the excite of a political existence." It is this, too, which to the warrior's and the traveller's existence such culiar reality; and it is this, in a far lower form, w stimulates the pleasure of a fashionable life — w sends the votaries of the world in a constant r from the capital to the watering-place, and fron watering-place to the capital; what they crave the power of feeling intensely.

Now, the proper and natural outlet for this feeling is the life of the Spirit. What is religion but fuller life? To live in the Spirit, what is it but to have keener feelings and mightier powers — to rise into a higher consciousness of life? What is religion's self but feeling? The highest form of religion is charity. Love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. This is an intense feeling, — too intense to be excited, profound in its calmness, — yet it rises at times, in its higher flights, into that ecstatic life which glances in a moment intuitively through ages. These are the pentecostal hours of our existence, when the Spirit comes as a mighty rushing wind, in cloven tongues of fire, filling the soul with God.

II. The dissimilarity, or contrast, in St. Paul's idea. The one fulness begins from without, the other from within. The one proceeds from the flesh, and then influences the emotions. The other reverses this order. Stimulants, like wine, inflame the senses, and through them set the imaginations and feelings on fire: and the law of our spiritual being is, that that which begins with the flesh sensualizes the Spirit, whereas that which commences in the region of the Spirit spiritualizes the senses, in which it subsequently stirs emotion. But the misfortune is that men mistake this law of their emotions; and the fatal error is, when, having found spiritual feelings existing in connection and associated with fleshly sensations, men expect by the mere irritation of the emotions of the frame to reproduce those high and glorious feelings. You might conceive the recipients of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost acting under this delusion; it is

conceivable that, having observed certain bodi
nomena, — for instance, incoherent utterance
thrilled sensibilities coëxisting with those sublim
itualities, — they might have endeavored, by a
tion of those incoherences, to obtain a fresh d
of the Spirit. In fact, this was exactly what wa
in after-ages of the Church. In those events of c
history which are denominated revivals, in the
of the Methodist and the Ranter, a direct attemp
made to arouse the emotions by exciting addresse
vehement language. Convulsions, shrieks, and v
emotions, were produced; and the unfortunate vi
of this mistaken attempt to produce the cause b
effect fancied themselves, and were pronounce
others, converted. Now, the misfortune is, that
delusion is the more easy from the fact that the re
of the two kinds of causes resemble each other.
may galvanize the nerve of a corpse till the actio
a limb startles the spectator with the appearanc
life. It is not life; it is only a spasmodic, hideous
icry of life. Men, having seen that the spiritu
always associated with forms, endeavor by reprodu
the forms to recall spirituality; you do produce the
a something that looks like spirituality, but it is
semblance only. The worst case of all occurs in
department of the affections. That which begin
the heart ennobles the whole animal being; but
which begins in the inferior departments of our b
is the most entire degradation and sensualizing
the soul.

Now, it is from this point of thought that we l
to extend the apostle's principle. Wine is b
specimen of a class of stimulants. All that be

from *without* belongs to the same class. The stimulus may be afforded by almost any enjoyment of the senses. Drunkenness may come from anything wherein is excess; from over-indulgence in society, in pleasure, in music, and in the delight of listening to oratory,—nay, even from the excitement of sermons and religious meetings. The prophet tells us of those who are drunken, and not with wine.

The other point of difference is one of effect. Fulness of the Spirit calms: fulness produced by excitement satiates and exhausts. They who know the world of fashion tell us that the tone adopted there is, either to be, or to affect to be, sated with enjoyment; to be proof against surprise, to have lost all keenness of enjoyment, and to have all keenness of wonder gone. That which ought to be men's shame becomes their boast—unsusceptibility of any fresh emotion.

Whether this be real or affected, matters not; it is, in truth, the real result of the indulgence of the senses. The law is this: the "crime of sense is avenged by sense which wears with time;" for it has been well remarked that the terrific punishment attached to the habitual indulgence of the senses is, that the incitements to enjoyment increase in proportion as the power of enjoyment fades.

Experience at last forbids even the hope of enjoyment: the sin of the intoxicated soul is loathed, detested, abhorred: yet it is done. The irritated sense, like an avenging fury, goads on with a restlessness of craving, and compels a reiteration of the guilt, though it has ceased to charm.

To this danger our own age is peculiarly exposed.

In the earlier and simpler ages, the need of ke
ing finds a natural and safe outlet in compulsor
tions. For instance, in the excitement of real v
and in the necessity of providing the sustena
life, warlike habits and healthy labor stimulat
out exhausting life. But in proportion as civi
advances, a large class of the community are ex
from the necessity of these, and thrown upon a
leisure. Then it is that artificial life begins, an
cial expedients become necessary to sharpen t
ings amongst the monotony of existence; every
ment and all literature become more pungent
character; life is no longer a thing proceedin
powers *within*, but sustained by new impulse
without.

There is one peculiar form of this danger to
I would specially direct your attention. Th
one nation in Europe which, more than any oth
been subjected to these influences. In ages o
lution, nations live fast; centuries of life are
in fifty years of time. In such a state individu
come subjected more or less to the influences
are working around them. Scarcely an enjoyn
a book can be met with which does not bear
press of this intensity. Now, the particular
to which I allude is French novels, French rom
and French plays. The overflowings of that
excitement have reached our shores. I do n
that these works contain anything coarse or g
better if it were so: evil which comes in a fo
grossness is not nearly so dangerous as that
comes veiled in gracefulness and sentiment. Su
which are better not touched upon at all are disc

examined, and exhibited in all the most seductive forms of imagery. You would be shocked at seeing your son in a fit of intoxication; yet, I say it solemnly better that your son should reel through the streets in a fit of drunkenness, than that the delicacy of your daughter's mind should be injured, and her imagination inflamed with false fire. Twenty-four hours will terminate the evil in the one case. Twenty-four hours will not exhaust the effects of the other; you must seek the consequences at the end of many, many years. I speak that which I do know; and if the earnest warning of one who has seen the dangers of which he speaks realized can reach the heart of one Christian parent, he will put a ban on all such works, and not suffer his children's hearts to be excited by a drunkenness which is worse than that of wine. For the worst of it is, that the men of our time are not yet alive to this growing evil; they are elsewhere, — in their studies, counting-houses, professions, — not knowing the food, or rather poison, on which their wives' and daughters' intellectual life is sustained. It is precisely those who are most unfitted to sustain the danger, whose feelings need restraint instead of spur, and whose imaginations are most inflammable, that are specially exposed to it.

On the other hand, spiritual life calms while it fills. True it is that there are pentecostal moments when such life reaches the stage of ecstasy. But these were given to the Church to prepare her for suffering; to give her martyrs a glimpse of blessedness, which might sustain them afterwards in the terrible struggles of death. True it is that there are pentecostal hours when the soul is surrounded by a kind of glory, and

we are tempted to make tabernacles upon the
as if life were meant for rest; but out of th
cloud there comes a voice telling of the Cr
bidding us descend into the common world a
simple duties and humble life. This very p
seems to be contained in the text.

The apostle's remedy for this artificial feeli
"Speaking to one another in psalms and hym
spiritual songs."

Strange remedy! Occupation fit for childre
simple far for men: as astonishing as the reme
scribed by the prophet to Naaman — to wash in
water, and be clean; yet therein lies a very imp
truth. In ancient medical phraseology, herbs po
of healing natures were called simples: in God's
tory, all things that heal are simple — all natural
ments, all the deepest, are simple too. At nigh
fills his banquet-hall with the glare of splendor
fevers as well as fires the heart; and, at the ver
hour, as if by intended contrast, the quiet stars
steal forth, shedding, together with the deepest f
the profoundest sense of calm. One from whose
edge of the sources of natural feeling there lies
no appeal has said that to him

> "The meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

This is exceedingly remarkable in the life of
No contrast is more striking than that presented
thought that that deep and beautiful life was sp
the midst of mad Jerusalem. Remember the S
man standing quietly in the porches of Bethesda,
the streets all around were filled with the revel

innumerable multitudes, who had come to be present at the annual feast. Remember Him pausing to weep over his country's doomed metropolis, unexcited, while the giddy crowd around Him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Remember Him in Pilate's judgment-hall, meek, self-possessed, standing in the serenity of Truth, while all around Him was agitation — hesitation in the breast of Pilate, hatred in the bosom of the Pharisees, consternation in the heart of the disciples.

And this, in truth, is what we want: we want the vision of a calmer and simpler Beauty to tranquillize us in the midst of artificial tastes — we want the draught of a purer spring to cool the flame of our excited life. We want, in other words, the Spirit of the Life of Christ, simple, natural, with power to calm and soothe the feelings which it rouses; the fulness of the Spirit which can never intoxicate!

X.

(Preached August 11, 1850.)

PURITY.

Titus i. 15. — "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."

For the evils of this world there are two classes of remedies: one is the world's, the other is God's. The world proposes to remedy evil by adjusting the circumstances of this life to man's desires. The world says, Give us a perfect set of *circumstances*, and we shall have a set of perfect men. This principle lies at the root of the system called Socialism. Socialism proceeds on the principle that all moral and physical evil arises from unjust laws. If these can be remedied, the effect will be good. But Christianity throws aside all that, as merely chimerical, and proves that the fault is not in outward circumstances but in ourselves. Like the wise physician, who, instead of busying himself with transcendental theories to improve the climate and the outward circumstances of man, endeavors to relieve and get rid of the tendencies of disease which are from within, Christianity, leaving all outward circumstances to ameliorate themselves, fastens its attention on the spirit which

(1

deal with them. Christ has declared that the kingdom of heaven is from within. He said to the Pharisee, "Ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within ye are full of extortion and excess."

The remedy for all this is a large and liberal charity, so overflowing that "unto the pure all things are pure." To internal purity all external things *become* pure.

The principle that St. Paul has here laid down is, that each man is the creator of his own world; he walks in a universe of his own creation.

As the free air is to one out of health the cause of cold and diseased lungs, so to the healthy man it is a source of great vigor. The rotten fruit is sweet to the worm, but nauseous to the palate of man. It is the same air and the same fruit acting differently upon different beings. To different men a different world: to one all pollution; to another all purity. To the noble, all things are noble, to the mean, all things are contemptible.

The subject divides itself into two parts.

I. The apostle's principle.

II. The application of the principle.

Here we have the same principle again: each man creates his own world. Take it in its simplest form. The eye creates the outward world it sees. We see not things as they are, but as God has made the eye to receive them.

In its strictest sense, the creation of a new man is the creation of a new universe. Conceive an eye so constructed that the planets and all within them should be minutely seen, and all that is near should

3 invisible, like things seen through
, or as we see through a magnifying-gla
of the butterfly, and the bloom upo
then it is manifestly clear that we have
existence actually a new *creation*, and no
jects. The mind's eye creates a world for its
gain, the visible world presents a different
ach individual man. You will say that the
you see are seen by all:- that the fores
the flood, and the sea, are the same to all
all these things so seen to different minds
of different universes. One man sees i
river an emblem of eternity; he closes his
and feels that God is there. Another sees no
in it but a very convenient road for transporting
spices, silks, and merchandise. To one this w
appears useful; to another, beautiful. Whence co
the difference? From the soul within us. It
make of this world a vast chaos—"a mighty m
without a plan;" or a mere machine—a collectio
lifeless forces; or it can make it the Living Vestur
God, the tissue through which He can become vis
to us. In the spirit in which we look on it, the wo
is an arena for mere self-advancement, or a place
noble deeds, in which self is forgotten, and God is

Observe, this effect is traceable even in that p
duced by our different and changeful moods.
make and unmake a world more than once in the spa
of a single day. In trifling moods all seems trivi
In serious moods all seems solemn. Is the song
the nightingale merry or plaintive? Is it the voi
of joy, or the harbinger of gloom? Sometimes on
and sometimes the other, according to our differe

moods. We hear the ocean furious or exulting. The thunder-claps are grand, or angry, according to the different states of our mind. Nay, the very church-bells chime sadly or merrily, as our associations determine. They speak the language of our passing moods. The young adventurer, revolving sanguine plans upon the milestone, hears them speak to him as God did to Hagar in the wilderness, bidding him back to perseverance and greatness. The soul spreads its own hue over everything; the shroud or wedding garment of nature is woven in the loom of our own feelings. The universe is the express image and direct counterpart of the souls that dwell in it. Be noble-minded, and all Nature replies — I am divine, the child of God: be thou, too, His child, and noble. Be mean, and all Nature dwindles into a contemptible smallness.

In the second place, there are two ways in which this principle is true.

To the pure, all things and all persons are pure, because their purity makes all seem pure.

There are some who go through life complaining of this world; they say they have found nothing but treachery and deceit; the poor are ungrateful, and the rich are selfish. Yet we do not find such the best men. Experience tells us that each man most keenly and unerringly detects in others the vice with which he is most familiar himself.

Persons seem to each man what he is himself. One who suspects hypocrisy in the world is really transparent; the man constantly on the watch for cheating is generally dishonest; he who suspects impurity is prurient. This is the principle to which Christ alludes

He says, "Give alms of such things
and behold all things are clean unto you
s a large charity! Large "charity ho
." Look at that sublime apostle who
renes of Ephesus and Thessalonica pure, l
saw them in his own large love, and painte
s they were, but as his heart filled up the
ewed them in the light of his own noble
sentations of his own purity.

e more, to the pure all *things* are pure,
ll persons. That which is natural lies
gs, but in the minds of men. There is a dif
veen prudery and modesty. Prudery detects
where no wrong is; the wrong lies in the thc
and not in the objects. There is something of
sensitiveness and over-delicacy which shows no
cence, but an inflammable imagination. And n
the world cannot understand that those subjec
thoughts which to them are full of torture c
harmless, suggesting nothing evil to the pure in

Here, however, beware! No sentence of Scri
is more frequently on the lips of persons who p
themselves much license than the text, "To the
all things are pure." Yes, all things natural, bu
artificial — scenes which pamper the tastes, v
excite the senses. Innocence feels healthily.
all nature is pure. But just as the dove trembl
the approach of the hawk, and the young calf shud
at the lion never seen before, so innocence sh
instinctively from what is wrong by the same di
instinct. If that which is wrong seems pure, then
heart is not pure, but vitiated. To the right-min
all that is right in the course of this world seems p

Abraham, looking forward to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, entreated that it might be averted, and afterwards acquiesced! To the disordered mind "all things are out of course." This is the spirit which pervades the whole of the Ecclesiastes. There were two things which were perpetually suggesting themselves to the mind of Solomon — the intolerable sameness of this world, and the constant desire for change. And yet that same world, spread before the serene eye of God, was pronounced to be all "very good."

This disordered universe is the picture of your own mind. We make a wilderness by encouraging artificial wants, by creating sensitive and selfish feelings; then we project everything stamped with the impress of our own feelings, and we gather the whole of creation into our own pained being — "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The world you complain of as impure and wrong is not God's world, but your world; the blight, the dulness, the blank, are all your own. The light which is in you has become darkness, and therefore the light itself is dark.

Again, to the pure all things not only seem pure, but are really so, because they are made such.

1. As regards persons.

It is a marvellous thing to see how a pure and innocent heart purifies all that it approaches. The most ferocious natures are soothed and tamed by innocence. And so, with human beings, there is a delicacy so pure, that vicious men in its presence become almost pure; all of purity which is in them is brought out; like attaches itself to like. The pure

heart becomes a centre of attraction, round
similar atoms gather, and from which dissimila
are repelled. A corrupt heart elicits in an h
that is bad in us; a spiritual one brings out and
to itself all that is best and purest. Such was
He stood in the world, the Light of the wo
which all sparks of light gradually gathered.
stood in the presence of impurity, and men b
pure. Note this in the history of Zaccheus
answer to the invitation of the Son of man, he
"Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give t
poor; and if I have done wrong to any man, I r
him four-fold." So also the Scribe, "Well, M
thou hast well said, there is one God, and th
none other than He." To the pure Saviour al
pure. "He was lifted up on high, and drew all
unto Him."

Lastly, all situations are pure to the pure. Ac
ing to the world, some professions are reckoned
orable, and some dishonorable. Men judge acco
to a standard merely conventional, and not by th
moral rectitude. Yet it was, in truth, the men
were in these situations which made them such
the days of the Redeemer, the publican's occup
was a degraded one, merely because low, base
filled that place. But since He was born int
world a poor, laboring man, poverty is noble and
nified, and toil is honorable. To the man who
that "the king's daughter is all glorious within
outward situation can seem inglorious or impure.

There are three words which express almos
same thing, but whose meaning is entirely diffe
These are, the gibbet, the scaffold, and the cross.

far as we know, none die on the gibbet but men of dishonorable and base life. The scaffold suggests to our minds the noble deaths of our greatest martyrs. The cross was once a gibbet, but it is now the highest name we have, because He hung on it. Christ has purified and ennobled the cross. This principle runs through life. It is not the situation which makes the man, but the man who makes the situation. The slave may be a freeman. The monarch may be a slave. Situations are noble or ignoble, as we make them.

From all this subject we learn to understand two things.

Hence we understand the Fall. When man fell, the world fell with him. All creation received a shock. Thorns, briars, and thistles, sprang up. They were there before, but to the now restless and impatient hands of men they became obstacles and weeds. Death, which must ever have existed as a form of dissolution, — a passing from one state to another, — became a curse; the sting of death was sin — unchanged in itself, it changed in man. A dark, heavy cloud rested on it — the shadow of his own guilty heart.

Hence too, we understand the Millennium. The Bible says that these things are not to be forever. There are glorious things to come. Just as, in my former illustration, the alteration of the eye called new worlds into being, so now nothing more is needed than to recreate the soul, the mirror on which all things are reflected. Then is realized the prophecy of Isaiah, "Behold, I create all things new," "new heavens and a new earth."

clusion of this verse proves to us why
creations were called into being—"wher
ighteousness." To be righteous makes
w. We do not want a new world,—we w
rts. Let the Spirit of God purify society,
pure all things will be pure. The earth
look of weariness and gloom which it
ng, and then the glorious language of
will be fulfilled—"The forests will br
singing, and the desert will blossom as

XI.

[Preached February 9, 1851.]

UNITY AND PEACE

Colossians iii. 15. — "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

There is something in these words that might surprise us. It might surprise us to find that peace is urged on us as a duty. There can be no duty except where there is a matter of obedience; and it might seem to us that peace is a something over which we have no power. It is a privilege to have peace, but it would appear as if there were no power of control within the mind of a man able to insure that peace for itself. "Yet," says the apostle, "let the peace of God rule in your hearts." It would seem to us as if peace were as far beyond our own control as happiness. Unquestionably, we are not masters on our own responsibility of our own happiness. Happiness is the gratification of every innocent desire; but it is not given to us to insure the gratification of every desire; therefore, happiness is not a duty, and it is nowhere written in the Scripture, "You must be happy." But we find it written by the Apostle Paul, "Be ye thankful," implying, therefore, that peace is a

duty. The apostle says, "Let the peace of God in your hearts;" from which we infer that peac attainable, and within the reach of our own wills; if there be not repose there is blame; if there be peace, but discord in the heart, there is somet wrong. This is the more surprising when we ren ber the circumstances under which these words v written. They were written from Rome, where apostle lay in prison, daily and hourly expecting a lent death. They were written in days of persecut when false doctrines were rife, and religious anim ties fierce; they were written in an epistle abound with the most earnest and eager controversy, wher it is therefore implied that, according to the con tion of the Apostle Paul, it is possible for a Christ to live at the very point of death, and in the v midst of danger; that it is possible for him to breathing the atmosphere of religious controversy; is possible for him to be surrounded by bitterness, a even take up the pen of controversy himself; and : his soul shall not lose its own deep peace, nor t power of the infinite repose and rest of God. Join with the apostle's command to be at peace, we fi another doctrine, — the doctrine of the unity of t Church of Christ. "To the which ye are called in o: body," in order that ye may be at peace; in oth words, the unity of the Church of Christ is the bas on which, and on which alone, can be built the pos bility of the inward peace of individuals.

And thus, my Christian brethren, our subject divid itself into these two simple branches:

I. The unity of the Church of Christ.

II. The inward peace of the members of that Churc

1. The first subject, then, which we have to consider, is the unity of the Church of Christ.

And the first thing we have to do is both clearly to define and understand the meaning of that word "unity." I distinguish the unity of comprehensiveness from the unity of mere singularity. The word one, as oneness, is an ambiguous word. There is a oneness belonging to the army as well as to every soldier in the army. The army is one, and that is the oneness of unity; the soldier is one, but that is the oneness of the unit. There is a difference between the oneness of a body and the oneness of a member of that body. The body is many, and a unity of manifold comprehensiveness. An arm or a member of a body is one, but that is the unity of singularity. Without unity, my Christian brethren, peace must be impossible. There can be no peace in the one single soldier of an army. You do not speak of the harmony of one member of a body. There is peace in an army, or in a kingdom joined with other kingdoms; there is harmony in a member united with other members. There is no peace in a unit; there is no possibility of the harmony of that which is but one in itself. In order to have peace you must have a higher unity, and therein consists the unity of God's own being. The unity of God is the basis of the peace of God, — meaning by the unity of God the comprehensive manifoldness of God, and not merely the singularity in the number of God's being. When the Unitarian speaks of God as one, he means simply singularity of number. We mean that He is of manifold comprehensiveness — that there is unity between His various powers. Amongst the personalities or

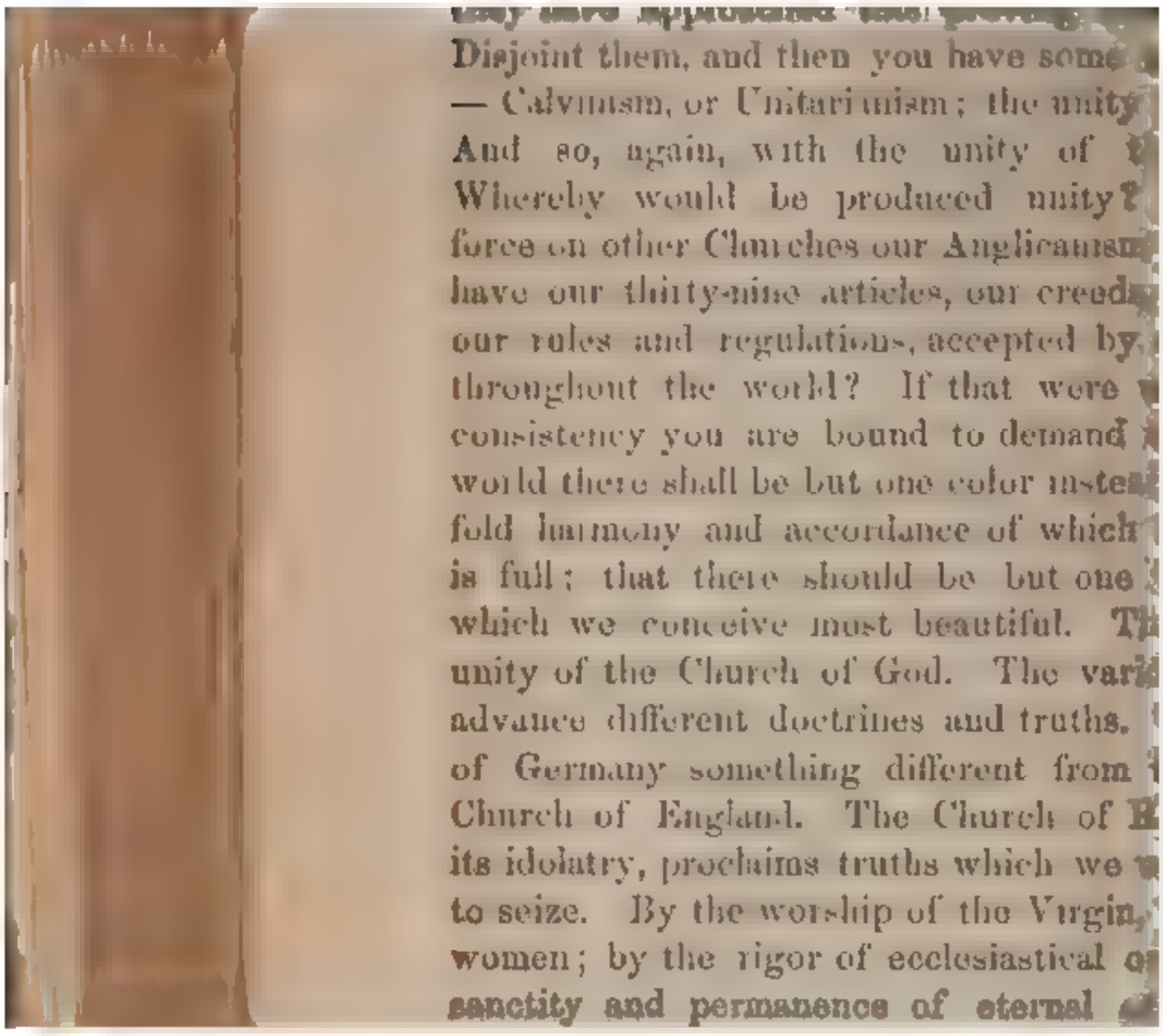
powers of His Being there is no discord, but p harmony, entire union; and that, brethren, is r the blessedness of infinite rest, that belongs t unity of God — "I and my Father are one."

The second thing which we observe respectin unity is that it subsists between things not simi alike, but things dissimilar or unlike. There i unity in the separate atoms of a sand-pit; the things similar; there is an aggregate or collecti them. Even if they be hardened in a mass, the not one; they do not form a unity — they are sim mass. There is no unity in a flock of sheep; simply a repetition of a number of things simil each other. If you strike off from a thousand hundred, or if you strike off nine hundred, the nothing lost of unity, because there never was u A flock of one thousand or a flock of five is jus much a flock as any other number.

On the other hand, let us turn to the unity of p which the apostle speaks of, and we find it is s thing different; it is made up of dissimilar memb without which dissimilarity there could be no u Each is imperfect in itself, each supplying what it in itself to the deficiencies and wants of the o members. So, if you strike off from this body one member, — if you cut off an arm, or tear out eye, — instantly the unity is destroyed; you have longer an entire and perfect body; there is noth but a remnant of the whole, — a part, a portion; unity whatever. And this will help us to understa the unity of the Church of Christ. If the ages a the centuries of the Church of Christ, if the differ Churches whereof it was composed, if the differ

members of each Church, were similar, — one in this, that they all held the same views, all spoke the same words, all viewed truth from the same side, — they would have no unity; but would simply be an aggregate of atoms, the sand-pit over again — units, multiplied it may be to infinity, but you would have no real unity, and therefore no peace. No unity; for wherein consists the unity of the Church of Christ? The unity of ages, brethren, consists it in this — that every age is merely the repetition of another age, and that which is held in one is held in another? Precisely in the same way, that is *not* the unity of the ages of the Christian Church.

Every century and every age has held a different truth — put forth different fragments of the truth. In early ages, for example, by martyrdom was proclaimed the eternal sanctity of truth, rather than give up which a man must lose his life. . . . . In our own age it is quite plain those are not the themes which engage us, or the truths which we put in force now. This age, by its revolutions, its socialisms, proclaims another truth — the brotherhood of the Church of Christ; so that the unity of ages subsists on the same principle as that of the unity of the human body: that as every separate ray — the violet, the blue, and the orange — make up the white ray, so these manifold fragments of truth blended together make up the one entire and perfect white ray of Truth. And with regard to individuals, taking the case of the Reformation, it was given to one Church to proclaim that salvation is a thing received, and not local; to another, to proclaim justification by faith; to another, the sovereignty of God; to another, the supremacy of the



Disjoint them, and then you have some
— Calvinism, or Unitarianism; the unity
And so, again, with the unity of
Whereby would be produced unity?
force on other Churches our Anglicanism
have our thirty-nine articles, our creeds
our rules and regulations, accepted by
throughout the world? If that were
consistency you are bound to demand
world there shall be but one color instead
fold harmony and accordance of which
is full; that there should be but one
which we conceive most beautiful. The
unity of the Church of God. The various
advance different doctrines and truths.
of Germany something different from
Church of England. The Church of Rome
its idolatry, proclaims truths which we
to seize. By the worship of the Virgin,
women; by the rigor of ecclesiastical
sanctity and permanence of eternal

We do not speak of peace in a single country. We say peace subsists between different countries where war *might* be. There can be no *peace* between two men who agree in everything; peace subsists between those who differ. There is no peace between Baptist and Baptist; so far as they are Baptists, there is perfect accordance and agreement. There may be peace between you and the Romanist, the Jew, or the Dissenter, because there are angles of sharpness which might come into collision if they were not subdued and softened by the power of love. It was given to the Apostle Paul to discern that this was the ground of unity. In the Church of Christ he saw men with different views, and he said, so far from that variety destroying unity, it was the only ground of unity. There are many doctrines, all of them different; but let those varieties be blended together, — in other words, let there be the peace of love, — and then you will have unity.

Once more, this unity, whereof the apostle speaks, consists in submission to one single influence or spirit. Wherein consists the unity of the body? Consists it not in this, — that there is one life uniting, making all the separate members one? Take away the life, and the members fall to pieces: they are no longer one, decomposition begins, and every element separates, no longer having any principle of cohesion or union with the rest. There is not one of us who, at some time or other, has not been struck with the power there is in a single living influence. Have we never, for instance, felt the power wherewith the orator unites and holds together a thousand men as if they were but one: with flashing eyes and throbbing hearts,

or whether it be enthusiasm, that one
made the thousand for the time one.
heard how, even in this century in wh
various and conflicting feelings of the
country were concentrated into one, w
of foreign invasion had fused down s
edges of conflict and variance, and from
was heard one cry of terrible defiance,
ent classes and orders of this unanif
England were as one? Have we not
mighty winds hold together, as if on
atoms of the desert, so that they rush
thing across the wilderness? And th
the unity of the Church of Christ, the su
one uniting Spirit of its God.

It will be said, in reply to this, "Wh
enthusiasm. It may be very beautiful
it is impossible in practice. It is mere
believe that while all these varieties
opinion remain, we can have unity: it is
seem to think that so long as men's mind

enactments, bidding back the waves of what is called aggression. Give us the living Spirit of God, and we shall be one. Once on this earth was exhibited, as it were, a specimen of perfect anticipation of such an unity, when the "rushing mighty wind" of Pentecost came down in the tongues of fire and sat on every man; when the Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, the "Cretes and Arabians," the Jew and the Gentile, each speaking one language, yet blended and fused into one unity by enthusiastic love, heard one another speak, as it were, in one language, the manifold works of God; when the spirit of giving was substituted for the spirit of mere rivalry and competition, and no man said the things he had were his own, but all shared in common. Let that spirit come again, as come it will, and come it must; and then, beneath the influences of a mightier love, we shall have a nobler and a more real unity.

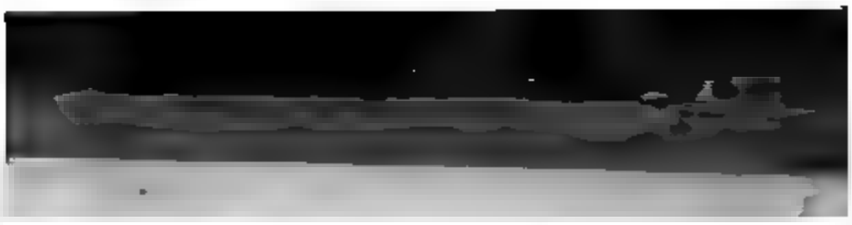
II. We pass on now, in the second place, to consider the *individual peace* resulting from this unity. As we have endeavored to explain what is meant by unity, so now let us endeavor to understand what is meant by peace. Peace, then, is the opposite of passion, and of labor, toil, and effort. Peace is that state in which there are no desires madly demanding an impossible gratification; that state in which there is no misery, no remorse, no sting. And there are but three things which can break that peace. The first is discord between the mind of man and the lot which he is called on to inherit; the second is discord between the affections and powers of the soul; and the third is doubt of the rectitude, and justice, and love, wherewith this

world is ordered. But where these thing
where a man is contented with his lot, w
is subdued to the spirit, and where he
feels with all his heart that all is right,—t
and to this, says the apostle, "ye are calle
is the grand, peculiar call of Christianit
'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are
and I will give you rest." This was the d
of Christ: "Peace I leave with you, My
unto you: not as the world giveth give I
and therein lies one of the greatest truths
and eternal character of Christianity, and
and satisfies the very deepest want and cr
nature. The deepest want of man is not
happiness, but a craving for peace; not a
gratification of every desire, but a cra
repose of acquiescence in the will of Go
this which Christianity promises. Chris
not promise happiness, but it does promise
the world ye shall have tribulation," saith
"but be of good cheer; I have overcome
Now, let us look more closely into this pe

The first thing we see respecting it i
called God's peace. God is rest: the in
of God is infinite repose. The "*I am*"
contrasted with the *I am become* of all

His unity. Not because He is an unit, but because He is an unity. There is no discord between the powers and attributes of the mind of God: there is no discord between His justice and His love; there is no discord demanding some miserable expedient to unite them together, such as some theologians imagined when they described the sacrifice and atonement of our Redeemer by saying, it is the clever expedient whereby God reconciles His justice with His love. God's justice and love are one. Infinite justice must be infinite love. Justice is but another sign of love. The infinite rest of the "*I am*" of God arises out of the harmony of His attributes.

The next thing we observe respecting this divine peace which has come down to man on earth is, that it is a *living peace*. Brethren, let us distinguish. There are several things called peace which are by no means divine or Godlike peace. There is peace, for example, in the man who lives for and enjoys self, with no nobler aspiration goading him on to make him feel the rest of God; that is peace, but that is merely the peace of toil. There is rest on the surface of the caverned lake, which no wind can stir; but that is the peace of stagnation. There is peace amongst the stones which have fallen and rolled down the mountain's side, and lie there quietly at rest, but that is the peace of inanity. There is peace in the hearts of enemies who lie together, side by side, in the same trench of the battle-field, the animosities of their souls silenced at length, and their hands no longer clenched in deadly enmity against each other; but that is the peace of death. If our peace be but the peace of the sensualist satisfying pleasure, if it be but the



peace of mental torpor and inaction, the peace
thy, or the peace of the soul dead in trespa
sins, we may whisper to ourselves, "Peace,
but there will be no peace; *there* is not the p
unity nor the peace of God, for the peace of Go
living peace of love.

The next thing we observe respecting thi
is, that it is the manifestation of power, — it
peace which comes from an inward power: "
peace of God," says the apostle, "rule with
hearts." For it is a power — the manifesta
strength. There is no peace except there is th
bility of the opposite of peace, although now re
and controlled. You do not speak of the pea
grain of sand, because it cannot be otherwi
merely insignificant, and at rest. You do no
of the peace of a mere pond; you speak of th
of the sea, because there is the opposite of pe
plied, there is power and strength. And this, b
is the real character of the peace in the mind a
of man. O! we make a great mistake when
there is strength in passion, in the exhibition
tion. Passion, and emotion, and all those o
manifestations, prove, not strength, but weakne
the passions of a man are strong, it proves t
himself is weak, if he cannot restrain or con
passions. The real strength and majesty of t
of man is calmness, the manifestation of strengt
peace of God" ruling; the word of Christ sa
the inward storms, "Peace!" and there is "
calm."

Lastly, the peace of which the apostle speak
peace that is received — the peace of reception

will observe, throughout this passage, the apostle speaks of a something received, and not done: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." It is throughout receptive, but by no means inactive. And, according to this, there are are two kinds of peace: the peace of obedience — "Let the peace of God rule" you; and there is the peace of gratefulness — "Be ye thankful." Very great, brethren, is the peace of obedience. When a man has his lot fixed, and his mind made up, and his destiny before him, and he quietly acquiesces in that, his spirit is at rest. Great and deep is the peace of the soldier to whom has been assigned even an untenable position, with the command, "Keep that, or die," and he obediently remains to die.

Great was the peace of Elisha, very, very calm are those words by which he expressed his acquiescence in the Divine will. "Knowest thou," said the troubled, excited, and restless men around him, — "knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?" He answered, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace." Then there is the other peace, it is the peace of gratefulness: "Be ye thankful." It is that peace which the Israelites had when these words were spoken to them on the shores of the Red Sea, while the bodies of their enemies floated past them, destroyed, but not by them: "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

And here, brethren is another mistake of ours; we look on salvation as a thing to be done, and not received. In God's salvation we can do but little, but there is a great deal to be received. We are here, not merely to act, but to be acted upon. "Let

ace of God rule in your hearts." Th
hat will enter there, if you do not th
a Spirit that will take possession of yo
d that you do not quench it. In this w
are recipients, not creators. In obedience
fulness, and the infinite peace of God in
n, is alone deep rest and repose.

XII.

[Preached January 4, 1852.]

THE CHRISTIAN AIM AND MOTIVE.

MATTHEW v. 48. — "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

THERE are two erroneous views held respecting the character of the Sermon on the Mount. The first may be called an error of worldly-minded men, the other an error of mistaken religionists. Worldly-minded men — men, that is, in whom the devotional feeling is but feeble — are accustomed to look upon morality as the whole of religion; and they suppose that the Sermon on the Mount was designed only to explain and enforce correct principles of morality. It tells of human duties and human proprieties; and an attention to these, they maintain, is the only religion which is required by it. Strange, my Christian brethren, that men whose lives are least remarkable for superhuman excellence should be the very men to refer most frequently to those sublime comments on Christian principle, and should so confidently conclude from thence that themselves are right, and all others are wrong. Yet so it is.

The other is an error of mistaken religionists. They sometimes regard the Sermon on the Mount

spirituality of the requirements of the
— its chief religious significance, to sh
impossibility of fulfilling the law, and th
the necessary inference that justification
faith alone. And so they would not serv
that, in the highest sense of that term, it
tianity at all, but only preparatory to it
spiritual Judaism; and that the highe
developed principles of Christianity are
in the writings of the apostles. Before
further, we would remark here that it see
startling to say that He who came to
pressly to preach the Gospel should, in
orate of all His discourses, omit to do so
something more than startling — it is abso
ing — to suppose that the letters of those
Christ should contain a more perfectly
freer and fuller Christianity, than is to
Christ's own words.

Now, you will observe that these tw
opposed to each other in their general re
are agreed in this — that the Sermon on

Redeemer. It is not, you will observe, a pure and spiritualized Judaism; it is contrasted with Judaism again and again by Him who spoke it. Quoting the words of Moses, he affirmed, "So was it spoken by them of old time, but *I say unto you* —" For example, "Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths." That is Judaism. "But I say unto you, Swear not at all, but let your yea be yea, and your nay nay." That is Christianity. And that which is the essential peculiarity of this Christianity lies in those two things. First of all, that the morality which it teaches is *disinterested* goodness — goodness not for the sake of the blessing that follows it, but for its own sake, and because it is right. "Love your enemies," is the Gospel precept. Why? — Because, if you love them, you shall be blessed; and if you do not, cursed? No; but "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of" — that is, may be like — "your Father which is in heaven." The second essential peculiarity of Christianity — and this, too, is an essential peculiarity of this Sermon — is that it teaches and enforces the law of self-sacrifice. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out; if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." Thus, brethren, is the law of self-sacrifice — the very law and spirit of the blessed cross of Christ.

How deeply and essentially Christian, then, this Sermon on the Mount is, we shall understand, if we are enabled in any measure to reach the meaning and spirit of the single passage which I have taken as my

text. It tells two things — the Christian aim and Christian motive.

I. The Christian aim — perfection.

II. The Christian motive — because it is right Godlike to be perfect.

I. We will, in the first place, take the first of th The Christian aim is this — to be perfect. — "Be therefore perfect." Now, distinguish this, I pray from mere worldly morality. It is not conformit a creed that is here required, but aspiration afte *state*. It is not demanded of us to perform a num of duties, but to yield obedience to a certain spiri law. But let us endeavor to explain this more fu What is the meaning of this expression, "Be ye p fect"? Why is it that in this discourse, instead being commanded to perform religious duties, we commanded to think of being like God? Will that inflame our pride, and increase our natural va glory? Now, the nature and possibility of hum perfection, what it is and how it is possible, are bo contained in one single expression in the text: "Ev as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Th relationship between father and son implies consa guinity, likeness, similarity of character and natur God *made* the insect, the stone, the lily; but God not the Father of the caterpillar, the lily, or the ston When, therefore, God is said to be our Father, som thing more is implied in this than that God create man. And so, when the Son of man came proclaimin the fact that we are the children of God, it was in th truest sense a revelation. He told us that the natur of God resembles the nature of man; that love in Go

is not a mere figure of speech, but means the same thing as love in us; and that divine anger is the same thing as human anger divested of its emotions and imperfections. Therefore, when we are commanded to be like God,- it implies that God has that nature of which we have already the germs. And this has been taught by the incarnation of the Redeemer. Things absolutely dissimilar in their nature cannot mingle. Water cannot coalesce with fire — water cannot mix with oil. If, then, humanity and divinity were united in the person of the Redeemer, it follows that there must be something kindred between the two, or else the incarnation had been impossible; so that the incarnation is the realization of man's perfection.

But let us examine more deeply this assertion, that *our* nature is kindred with that of God; for if man has not a nature kindred to God's, then a demand such as that, "Be ye the children of — that is, like — God," is but a mockery of man. We say, then, in the first place, that in the truest sense of the word man can be a creator. The beaver *makes* its hole, the bee *makes* its cell; man alone has the power of *creating*. The mason *makes*, the architect *creates*. In the same sense that we say God created the universe, we say that man is also a creator. The creation of the universe was the Eternal Thought taking reality. And thought taking expression is also a creation. Whenever, therefore, there is a living thought shaping itself in wood or in stone, there is there a creation. And therefore it is that the simplest effort of what we call genius is prized infinitely more than the most elaborate performances which are done by mere workman-ship, and for this reason: that the one is produced by an effort of

power which we share with the beaver a that of *making*, — and the other by a facu which man alone shares with God.

Here, however, you will observe and It will be said, at once, There is some comparison of man with God which le phemy: because one is finite and the oth man is bounded, God boundless; and th semblance and kindred between these tw of resemblance and kindred between tw sentially different. But this is precisely t which is brought by the Socinians against of the incarnation; and we are bound to Socinian argument is right, unless there b ity of which we have been speaking. Un something in man's nature which truly s partakes of the Divine nature, there could nation, and the demand for perfection mockery and an impossibility.

Let us, then, endeavor to find out the this infinitude in the nature of man. It find it in this — that the desires of man a thing boundless and unattainable. Thus Lord: "What shall it profit a man if he tho whole world, and lose his own so school-boy has heard the story of the y

the folly of the question. He who asked his son why he did not at once take the rest which it was his ultimate purpose to enjoy, knew not the immensity and nobility of the human soul. He could not *then* take his rest and be happy. As long as one realm remained unconquered, so long rest was impossible; he would weep for fresh worlds to conquer. And thus, that which was spoken by our Lord of one earthly gratification is true of all — "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." The boundless, endless, infinite void in the soul of man can be satisfied with nothing but God. Satisfaction lies not in *having*, but in *being*. There is no satisfaction even in *doing*. Man cannot be satisfied with his own performances. When the righteous young ruler came to Christ, and declared that, in reference to the life gone by, he had kept all the commandments and fulfilled all the duties required by the Law, still came the question, "What lack I yet?" The Scribes and Pharisees were the strictest observers of the ceremonies of the Jewish religion; "touching the righteousness which is by the Law" they were blameless; but yet they wanted something more than that, and they were found on the brink of Jordan imploring the baptism of John, seeking after a new and higher state than they had yet attained to, — a significant proof that man cannot be satisfied with his own works. And again, there is not one of us who has ever been satisfied with his own performances. There is no man, whose doings are worth anything, who has not felt that he has not yet done that which he feels himself able to do. While he was doing it, he was kept up by the spirit of hope; but when done, the thing seemed to him worthless.

longed for the termination of his earth
this reason — that he had been satisfied
performance; satisfied for the first time in
this expression of his satisfaction was but
saying that he had reached the goal, beyond
could be no progress. This impossibil
satisfied with his own performances is
strongest proofs of our immortality — a
perfection towards which we shall forev
which we can never attain.

A second trace of this infinitude in ma
find in the infinite capacities of the soul.
intellectually and morally. With referen
tellectual capacities, it would perhaps be
correct to say that they are indefinite,
infinite; that is, we can affix to them no
there is no man, however low his intellec
may be, who has not, at one time or an
rush of thought, a glow of inspiration, wh
to make all things possible, as if it were
effect of some imperfect organization wh
the way of his doing whatever he d

that moment infinitude was to him, not a name, but a reality. He entered into the infinite of time and space, which is not measured by days, or months, or years, but it is alike boundless and eternal.

Again, we perceive a third trace of this infinitude in man, in the power which he possesses of giving up self. In this, perhaps, more than in anything else, man may claim kindred with God. Nor is this power confined to the best of mankind, but is possessed, to some extent, at least, by all. There is no man, how low soever he may be, who has not one or two causes or secrets which no earthly consideration would induce him to betray. There is no man who does not feel, towards one or two at least, in this world, a devotion which all the bribes of the universe would not be able to shake. We have heard the story of that degraded criminal who, when sentence of death was passed upon him, turned to his accomplice in guilt, in whose favor a verdict of acquittal was brought in, and, in glorious self forgetfulness, exclaimed, "Thank God, *you* are saved!" The savage and barbarous Indian, whose life has been one unbroken series of cruelty and crime, will submit to a slow, lingering, torturing death, rather than betray his country. Now, what shall we say to these things? Do they not tell of an indestructible something in the nature of man, of which the origin is divine? — the remains of a majesty which, though it may be sullied, can never be entirely lost?

Before passing on, let us observe that were it not for this conviction of the divine origin, and consequent perfectibility, of our nature, the very thought of God would be painful to us. God is so great, so

glorious, that the mind is overwhelmed
from, the contemplation of His excellen
comes the tender, ennobling thought
children of God, who are to become
in Heaven, — whose blessed career it is
advance of love and duty towards Him
Him as we are loved, and know Him a
known.

II. We pass on now, in the second
sider the Christian motive — "Even a
which is in heaven is perfect." Bru
prudence — miscalled morality — says,
you will find your gain in being so. Do
be the better for it — even in this world
lose by it." The mistaken religionist
this on a large scale. "Your duty," h
save your soul; give up this world to
lose *here*, that you may gain *hereafter*."
but prudence, after all; it is but magnif
carried on into eternity, — none the
being *eternal* selfishness. Now, in opp
such sentiments as these, thus speaks the
ye perfect." Why? "Because your F
in heaven is perfect." Do right becau
and right as to do. Here becomes the

ciful, for they shall obtain mercy; blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." But when these are made our motives, when we become meek in order that we may inherit here, then the promised enjoyment will not come. If we are merciful merely that we may ourselves obtain mercy, we shall not have that indwelling love of God which is the result and token of His forgiveness. Such was the law, and such the example of our Lord and Master. True it is, that in the prosecution of the great work of redemption He had "respect to the recompense of reward." True it is, He was conscious — how could He but be conscious? — that when His work was completed He should be "glorified with that glory which He had with the Father before the world began;" — but we deny that this was the *motive* which induced Him to undertake that work; and that man has a very mistaken idea of the character of the Redeemer, and understands but little of His spirit, who has so mean an opinion of Him as to suppose that it was any consideration of personal happiness and blessedness which led the Son of God to die. "For this end was He born, and for this end came He into the world, to bear witness unto the Truth," and "to finish the work which was given Him to do."

If we were asked, Can you select one text in which, more than in any other, this unselfish, disinterested feature comes forth? it should be this: "Love ye your enemies, do good and lend, hoping for nothing again." This is the true spirit of Christianity — doing right disinterestedly, not from the hope of any personal advantage or reward, either temporal or spiritual, but

been neglecting his personal prospects
ing his own soul, this was his magn
— one of those which show the light o
ing through like an inspiration. He sa
think about my own soul; I had no time
myself; I had forgotten all about my soul
tian is not concerned about his own hap
not time to consider himself; he has no
that selfish question which the disciples
Lord, when they were but half-baptized w
"Lo, we have left all and followed The
we have therefor?"

In conclusion, we observe there are
which are to be learned from this p
first is this — that happiness is not our
It has been said, and has since been
frequently as if it were an indisputable
"Happiness is our being's end and aim
happiness is *not* our being's end and
Christian's aim is perfection, not hap
every one of the sons of God must ha

which there can be no change. Politically, morally, spiritually, there can be no rest for man here. In one country alone has that system been fully carried out which, conservative of the past, excludes all desire of progress and improvement for the future; but it is not to China that we should look for the perfection of human society. There is one ecclesiastical system which carries out the same spirit, looking rather to the Church of the past than to the Church of the future; but it is not in the Romish that we shall find the model of a Christian Church. In Paradise it may have been right to be at rest, to desire no change; but, ever since the Fall, every system that tends to check the onward progress of mankind is fatally, radically, carelessly wrong. The motto on every Christian banner is, "Forwards." There is no resting in the present, no satisfaction in the past.

The last thing we learn from this is the impossibility of obtaining that of which some men speak — the satisfaction of a good conscience. Some men write and speak as if the difference between the Christian and the worldly man was this, — that in the one conscience is a self-reproaching hell, and in the other a self-congratulating heaven. O, brethren, is this the fact? Think you that the Christian goes home at night counting up the noble deeds done during the day, saying to himself, "Well done, good and faithful servant"? Brethren, that habit of looking forwards to the future prevents all pride and self-righteousness, and makes our best and only rest and satisfaction to consist in contemplating the future which is bringing us nearer and nearer home.

Our motto, therefore, must be that striking
Apostle Paul: "Forgetting those things
behind, and reaching forth to those things
before, I press towards the mark for the pr
high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

XIII.

[Preached January 4, 1852.]

CHRISTIAN CASUISTRY.

1 Corinthians vii. 18–24 — "Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God."

The whole of these seven chapters of the First Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians is occupied with questions of Christian casuistry. In the application of the principles of Christianity to the varying circumstances of life, innumerable difficulties had arisen; and the Corinthians upon these difficulties had put certain questions to the Apostle Paul. This seventh chapter contains the apostle's answer to many of these questions. There are, however, two great divisions into which these answers generally fall. Saint Paul makes a distinction between those things which he speaks by commandment, and those which he speaks only by permission; there is a dis-

ful." It is manifestly plain that there
tions in which *right* and *wrong* are no
indissoluble and fixed: while there are
the other hand, where these terms
but variable, fluctuating, altering, de
circumstances. As, for instance, those
apostle teaches, in the present chapte
duties and advantages of marriage
There may be circumstances in which
of a Christian man to be married; there
which it may be his duty to remain un
instance, in the case of a missionary it
to be married rather than unmarried;
hand, in the case of a pauper, not hav
withal to bring up and maintain a
be proper to remain unmarried. You
however, that no fixed law can be la
this subject. We cannot say marriage
duty, nor celibacy is a Christian duty;
in every case the duty of a missionary
or of a pauper to be unmarried. All
must vary according to circumstance

as having the Spirit of God. A distinction has sometimes been drawn, with reference to this chapter, between that which the apostle speaks by inspiration and what he speaks as a man uninspired. The distinction, however, is an altogether false one, and beside the question. For the real distinction is not between inspired and uninspired, but between a *decision* in matters of Christian duty and *advice* in matters of Christian prudence. It is abundantly evident that God cannot give advice; He can only issue a command. God cannot say, "It is better to to do this;" His perfections demand something absolute: "Thou shalt *do* this: thou shalt *not* do this." Whensoever, therefore, we come to advice, there is introduced the human element rather than the divine. In all such cases, therefore, as are dependent upon circumstances, the apostle speaks not as inspired, but as uninspired; as one whose judgment we have no right to find fault with, or to cavil at,—who lays down what is a matter of Christian prudence, and not a bounden and universal duty. The matter of the present discourse will take in various verses in this chapter,—from the tenth to the twenty-fourth verse,—leaving part of the commencement and the conclusion for our consideration, if God permit, next Sunday.

There are three main questions on which the apostle here gives his inspired decision. The first decision is concerning the sanctity of the marriage bond between two Christians. His verdict is given in the tenth verse: "Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband." He lays down this principle, that the union is an indissoluble one. Upon such a subject, Christian

brethren, before a mixed congregation, it is manifes evident that we can only speak in general terms. will be sufficient to say that marriage is, of all earth unions, almost the only one permitting of no char but that of death. It is that engagement in which m exerts his most awful and solemn power — the pow of responsibility which belongs to him as one th shall give account, the power of abnegating the rig to change, the power of parting with his freedo the power of doing *that* which in this world can nev be reversed. And yet it is perhaps that relationsh which is spoken of most frivolously, and entered in most carelessly and most wantonly. It is not an uni merely between two creatures — it is an union betwe two spirits; and the intention of that bond is perfect the nature of both, by supplementing the deficiencies with the force of contrast, giving to eac sex those excellences in which it is naturally deficient to the one, strength of character, and firmness of mor will; to the other, sympathy, meekness, tenderness And just so solemn and just so glorious as these end are for which the union was contemplated and intended just so terrible are the consequences if it be perverte and abused. For there is no relationship which ha so much power to ennoble and to exalt. Very strong language does the apostle use in this chapter respect ing it: "What knoweth thou, O wife, whether thou shalt *save* thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man whether thou shalt save thy wife?" The very powe of *saving* belongs to this relationship. And, on the other hand, there is no earthly relationship which ha so much power to wreck and ruin the soul. For there are two rocks in this world of ours on which the

soul must either anchor or be wrecked. The one is God; the other is the sex opposite to itself. The one is the "Rock of Ages," on which, if the human soul anchors, it lives the blessed life of faith; against which, if the soul be dashed and broken, there ensues the wreck of Atheism — the worst ruin of the soul. The other rock is of another character. Blessed is the man, blessed is the woman, whose life-experience has taught a confiding belief in the excellences of the sex opposite to their own — a blessedness second only to the blessedness of salvation. And the ruin, in the other case, is second only to the ruin of everlasting perdition — the same wreck and ruin of the soul. These, then, are the two tremendous alternatives: on the one hand, the possibility of securing, in all sympathy and tenderness, the laying of that step on which man rises towards his perfection; on the other hand, the blight of all sympathy, to be dragged down to earth, and forced to become frivolous and commonplace — to lose all zest and earnestness in life, to have heart and life degraded by mean and perpetually recurring sources of disagreement. These are the two alternatives, and it is the worst of these alternatives which the young risk when they form an inconsiderate union, — excusably, indeed, because through inexperience; and it is the worst of these alternatives which parents risk, not excusably, but inexcusably, when they bring up their children with no higher view of what that tie is than the merely prudential one of a rich and honorable marriage.

The second decision which the apostle makes, respecting another of the questions proposed to him by the Corinthians, is as to the sanctity of the marriage

here started. When of two heathen pa
was converted to Christianity, the qu
What in this case is the duty of the C
not the duty separation? Is not the marr
null and void — as if it were an union
dead and one living? And that perp
with a heathen, and therefore an ene
not that, in a relation so close and intima
defilement? The apostle decides this wi
inspired wisdom. He decides that the m
is sacred still. Diversities of religious
the furthest and widest diversity, cannot s
ration. And so he decides in the 13th
woman which hath an husband that believ
be pleased to dwell with her, let her not
And, "if any brother hath a wife that b
and she be pleased to dwell with him, let
her away," — v. 12. Now, for us in the
the decision on this point is not of so
ance as the reason which is adduced in
The proof which the apostle gives of th
the marriage is exceedingly remarkable

be to a heathen, "My child is a child of God," or, in the Jewish form of expression, "My child is *clean*." So the apostle says, "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy:" for it follows, if the children are holy in this sense of dedicated to God, and are capable of Christian relationship, then the marriage relation was not unhallowed, but sacred and indissoluble. The value of this argument in the present day depends on its relationship to baptism. The great question we are deciding in the present day may be reduced to a very few words. This question — the baptismal question — is this: Whether we are baptized because we *are* the children of God, or, whether we are the children of God because we are *baptized*; whether, in other words, when the Catechism of the Church of England says that by baptism we are "made the children of God," we are to understand thereby that we are made something which we were not before — magically and mysteriously changed; or, whether we are to understand that we are made the children of God by baptism in the same sense that a sovereign is made a sovereign by coronation. Here the apostle's argument is full, decisive, and unanswerable. He does not say that these children were Christian, or clean, because they were *baptized*, but they were the children of God because they were the children of one Christian parent; nay, more than that, such children could scarcely ever have been baptized, because, if the rite met with opposition from one of the parents, it would be an entire and perfect veto to the possibility of baptism. You will observe that the very

damental idea out of which infant baptism arises that the impression produced upon the mind and c acter of the child by the Christian parent makes child one of a Christian community; and, theref as Peter argued that Cornelius had received the H Ghost, and so was to be baptized, just in the s way, as they are adopted into the Christian fam and receive a Christian impression, the children Christian parents are also to be baptized.

Observe also the important truth which comes collaterally from this argument, namely, the sac ness of the impression, which arises from the cl connection between parent and child. Stronger than education — going on before education can c mence, possibly from the very first moments of c sciousness, we begin to impress ourselves on children. Our character, voice, features, qualities, modified, no doubt, by entering into a new hum being, and into a different organization, — are pressed upon our children. Not the inculcation opinions, but much rather the formation of principl and of the tone of character, the derivation of qu ties. Physiologists tell us of the derivation of t mental qualities from the father, and of the mo from the mother. But, be this as it may, there scarcely one here who cannot trace back his prese religious character to some impression, in early li from one or other of his parents — a tone, a loo a word, a habit, or even, it may be, a bitter, miserab exclamation of remorse.

The third decision which the apostle gives, th third principle which he lays down, is but the deve opment of the last. Christianity, he says, does n

interfere with existing relationships. First, he lays down the principle, and then unfolds the principle in two ways — ecclesiastically and civilly. The principle he lays down in almost every variety of form. In the 17th verse, "As God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk." In the 20th verse, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." In the 24th verse, "Brethren, let every man wherein he is called therein abide with God." This is the principle. Christianity was not to interfere with existing relationships; Christian men were to remain in those relationships in which they were, and in them to develop the inward spirituality of the Christian life. Then he applies this principle in two ways. First of all, ecclesiastically. With respect to their church, or ecclesiastical affairs, he says: "Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any man in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised." In other words, the Jews, after their conversion, were to continue Jews, if they would. Christianity required no change in these outward things, for it was not in *these* that the depth and reality of the kingdom of Christ consisted. So the Apostle Paul took Timothy and circumcised him; so, also, he used all the Jewish customs with which he was familiar, and performed a vow, as related in the Acts of the Apostles, "having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow." It was not his opinion that it was the duty of a Christian to overthrow the Jewish system. He knew that the Jewish system could not last, but what he wanted was to vitalize the system — to throw into it not a Jewish, but a Christian feeling: and so

doing, he might continue in it so long as it would l
together. And so it was, no doubt, with all the o
apostles. We have no evidence that, before
destruction of the Jewish polity, there was
attempt made by them to overthrow the Jewish ex
nal religion. They kept the Jewish Sabbath,
observed the Jewish ritual. One of them — James,
Christian Bishop of Jerusalem — though a Christ
was even among the Jews remarkable and honore
for the regularity with which he observed all his J
ish duties. Now, let us apply this to modern dut
The great desire among men now appears to be
alter institutions — to have perfect institutions, a
they would make perfect men. Mark the differe
between this feeling and that of the apostle: "
every man abide in the same calling wherein he
called." We are called to be members of the Chu
of England — what is our duty now? What wo
Paul have done? Is this our duty — to put st
questions to ourselves as these? "Is there any sing
particular sentence in the service of my Church w
which I do not entirely agree? Is there any sin
ceremony with which my whole soul does not
along? If so, then is it my duty to leave it at once
No, my brethren; all that we have to do is to say, "
our existing institutions are those under which G
has placed us, under which we are to mould our liv
according to His will." It is our duty to vitalize o
forms; to throw into them a holier, deeper meanin
My Christian brethren, surely no man will get tr
rest, true repose for his soul, in these days of conti
versy, until he has learned the wise significance
these wise words: "Let every man abide in t

same calling wherein he was called." He will but gain unrest, he will but disquiet himself, if he says, "I am sinning by continuing in this imperfect system," if he considers it his duty to change his calling, if his opinions do not agree in every particular and special point with the system under which God has placed him.

Lastly, the apostle applies this principle civilly. And you will observe he applies it to that civil relationship which, of all others, was the most difficult to harmonize with Christianity — slavery. "Art thou called," he says, "being a servant? Care not for it." Now, in considering this part of the subject, we should carry along with us these two recollections. First, we should recollect that Christianity had made much way among this particular class, — the class of slaves. No wonder that men cursed with slavery embraced with joy a religion which was perpetually teaching the worth and dignity of the human soul, and declaring that rich and poor, peer and peasant, master and slave, were equal in the sight of God. And yet, great as this growth was, it contained within it elements of danger. It was to be feared, lest men, hearing forever of brotherhood and Christian equality, should be tempted and excited to throw off the yoke by *force*, and compel their masters and oppressors to do them right.

The other fact we are to keep in remembrance is this: that all this occurred in an age in which slavery had reached its worst and most fearful form, — an age in which the emperors were accustomed, not unfrequently, to feed their fish with living slaves; when captives were led to fight in the amphitheatre with

wild beasts or with each other, to glut the Ro appetite for blood upon a Roman holiday. And fearful as it was, the apostle says, "Care not for And, fearful as war was in those days, when the diers came to John to be baptized, he did not rec mend them to join some "Peace Association," to the modern term; he simply exhorted them to be c tent with their wages. And hence we understand way in which Christianity was to work. It interfe indirectly, and not directly, with existing institutic No doubt it will, at length, abolish war and slave but there is not one case where we find Christian interfering with institutions, as such. Even wl Onesimus ran away and came to Paul, the apostle s him back to his master Philemon, not dissolving t connection between them. And then, as a consolati to the servant, he told him of a higher feeling— feeling that would make him free with a chain a shackle upon his arm. And so it was possible for t Christian then, as it is now, to be possessed of t highest liberty, even under tyranny. It many tim occurred that Christian men found themselves plac under an unjust and tyrannical government, and co pelled to pay unjust taxes. The Son of man show his freedom, not by refusing, but by paying them. H glorious liberty could do so without any feeling c degradation, — obeying the laws, not because the were right, but because institutions are to be uphel with cordiality.

One thing, in conclusion, we have to observe. It i possible from all this to draw a most inaccurate co clusion. Some men have spoken of Christianity as i it was entirely indifferent about liberty and all publi

questions; as if with such things as these Christianity did not concern itself at all. This indifference is not to be found in the Apostle Paul. While he asserts that inward liberty is the only true liberty, he still goes on to say, "If thou mayest be free, use it rather." For he well knew that, although it was possible for a man to be a high and lofty Christian, even though he were a slave, yet it was not probable that he would be so. Outward institutions are necessary, partly, to make a perfect Christian character, and thus Christianity works from what is internal to what is external. It gave to the slave the feeling of his dignity as a man, at the same time it gave to the Christian master a new view of his relation to his slave, and taught him to regard him "not now as a servant, but above a servant, — a brother beloved." And so, by degrees, slavery passed into freed servitude; and freed servitude, under God's blessing, may pass into something else. There are two mistakes which are often made upon this subject: one is, the error of supposing that outward institutions are unnecessary for the formation of character; and the other, that of supposing that they are *all* that is required to form the human soul. If we understand rightly the duty of a Christian man, it is this: to make his brethren free inwardly and outwardly; first inwardly, so that they may become masters of themselves, rulers of their passions, having the power of self-rule and self-control; and then outwardly, so that there may be every power and opportunity of developing the inward life, — in the language of the prophet, "To break the rod of the oppressor, and let the oppressed go free."

XIV.

[Preached January 11, 1852.]

MARRIAGE AND CELIBACY.

1 Corinthians vii. 29–31. — "But this I say, brethren, the time is s it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though the none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as th they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusi for the fashion of this world passeth away."

The subject of our exposition last Sunday wa essential portion of this chapter. It is our dut examine now the former and the latter portions o These portions are occupied entirely with the insp apostolic decision upon this one question — the c parative advantages and merits of celibacy and m riage. One preliminary question, however, is to discussed. How came it that such a question sh be put at all to the apostle?

In the Church at Corinth there were two diffe sections of society: first, there were those who been introduced into the Church through Judaism, afterwards those who had been converted from di ent forms of heathenism. Now, it is well known t it was the tendency of Judaism highly to venerate marriage state, and just in the same proportion to

parage that of celibacy, and to place those who led a single life under a stigma and disgrace. Those converts, therefore, entered into the Church of Christ carrying with them their old Jewish prejudices. On the other hand, many who had entered into the Christian Church had been converted to Christianity from different forms of heathenism. Among these prevailed a tendency to the belief (which originated primarily in the oriental schools of philosophy) that the highest virtue consisted in the denial of all natural inclinations, and the suppression of all natural desires: and looking upon marriage on one side only, and that the lowest, they were tempted to consider it as low, earthly, carnal, and sensual. It was at this time that Christianity entered into the world, and while it added fresh dignity and significance to the marriage relationship, it at the same time shed a splendor and a glory upon the other state. The virginity of the mother of Our Lord, the solitary life of John the Baptist, the pure and solitary youth of Christ Himself, had thrown upon celibacy a meaning and dignity which it did not possess before. No marvel, therefore, that to men so educated, and but half prepared for Christianity, practices like these should have become exaggerations; for it rarely happens that any right ideas can be given to the world without suffering exaggeration. Human nature progresses, the human mind goes on; but it is rarely in a straight line,—almost always through the medium of reaction, rebounding from extremes which produce contrary extremes. So it was in the Church of Corinth. There were two opposite parties, holding views diametrically opposed to one another: one honoring the married and depreciating the unmarried

life; the other attributing peculiar dignity and s
tity to celibacy, and looking down with contempt u
the married Christian state.

It is scarcely necessary to remind ourselves that
diversity of sentiment has existed in the Church
Christ in almost all ages. For example, in the e
ages, in almost all the writings of the Fathers
have exaggerated descriptions of the dignity
glory of the state of celibacy. They speak as if
marriage state was low, carnal, and worldly, and
other the only one in which it is possible to attai
the higher spiritual life: the one the natural state,
for man; the other the angelic, fit for angels. I
ordinarily, among men in general, in every age,
state of single life has been looked down upon
contemned. And then there comes to the parties w
are so circumstanced a certain sense of shame, a
along with this a disposition towards calumny a
slander. Let us endeavor to understand the wi
inspired decision which the Apostle Paul pronounc
upon this subject. He does not decide, as we mig
have been led to suppose he would, from his ov
peculiarity of disposition, upon one side only; b
raises into relief the advantages and excellences
both. He says that neither state has in itself a
intrinsic merit — neither is in itself superior to t
other. "I suppose, then," he says, "that this is goo
for the present distress. Art thou bound unto a wife
seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife
seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou ha
not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinne
Nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh; bu
I spare you." That is, I will spare you this troubl

in recommending a single, solitary life. You will observe that in these words he attributes no intrinsic merit or dignity to either celibacy or marriage. The comparative advantages of these two states he decides with reference to two considerations: first of all, with respect to their comparative power in raising the character of the individual; and afterwards with reference to the opportunities which each respectively gives for the service of God.

I. With respect to the single life, he tells us that he had his own proper gift from God; in other words, he was one of those rare characters who have the power of living without personal sympathy. The feelings and affections of the Apostle Paul were of a strange and rare character, tending to expansiveness rather than concentration. Those sympathies which ordinary men expend upon a few he extended to many. The members of the churches which he had founded at Corinth, and Ephesus, and Colosse, and Philippi, were to him as children; and he threw upon them all that sympathy and affection which other men throw upon their own domestic circle. To a man so trained and educated, the single life gave opportunities of serving God which the marriage state could not give. Paul had risen at once to that philanthropy, that expansive benevolence, which most other men only attain by slow degrees; and this was made, by God's blessing, a means of serving his cause. However we may sneer at the monastic system of the Church of Rome, it is unquestionable that many great works have been done by the monks which could not have been performed by men who had entered into the marriage relationship.

Such examples of heroic Christian effort as are seen the lives of St. Bernard, of Francis Xavier, and ma others, are scarcely ever to be found, except in t single state. The forlorn hope in the cause of Chi tianity, as well as in battle, must consist of men w have no domestic relationships to divide their de tion, who will leave no wife nor children to mou over their loss.

Let this great truth bring its improvement to tho who, either of their own choice, or by the force circumstances, are destined hereafter to live a sing life on earth; and, instead of yielding to that feeli so common among mankind — the feeling of envy another's happiness — instead of becoming gloom and bitter, and censorious, let them remember wh the Bible has to tell of the deep significance of th Virgin Mary's life; let them reflect upon the snare and difficulties from which they are saved; let the consider how much more time and money they ca give to God — that they are called to the great wor of serving Causes, of entering into public question while others spend their time and talents only upo themselves. The state of single life, however we ma be tempted to think lightly of it, is a state that ha peculiar opportunities of deep blessedness.

On the other hand, the Apostle Paul brings forward into strong relief the blessedness and advantages of the marriage state. He tells us that it is a type of the union between the Redeemer and the Church. But, as this belongs to another part of the subject, we shall not enter into it now. But we observe, that men in general must have their sympathies drawn out step by step, little by little. We do not rise to philanthropy

all at once. We begin with personal, domestic, particular affections. And not only is it true that rarely can any man have the whole of his love drawn out except through this domestic state, but also it is to be borne in mind that those who have entered into this relationship have also their own peculiar advantages. It is true that in the marriage life, interrupted as it is by daily cares and small trifles, those works of Christian usefulness cannot be so continuously carried on as in the other. But is there not a deep meaning to be learned from the old expression — that celibacy is an *angelic* state? that it is preternatural, and not natural? that the goodness which is induced by it is not, so to speak, the natural goodness of humanity, but such a goodness as God scarcely intended? Who of us cannot recollect a period of his history when all his time was devoted to the cause of Christ, when all his money was given to the service of God, and when we were tempted to look down upon those who were less ardent than ourselves, as if they were not Christians? But now the difficulties of life have come upon us; we have become involved in the trifles and the smallness of sacred domestic existence; and these have made us less devoted, perhaps, less preternatural, less angelic, but more human, better fitted to enter into the daily cares and small difficulties of our ordinary humanity. And this has been represented to us by two great lives — one human the other divine — one the life of John the Baptist and the other of Jesus Christ. In both these cases is verified the saying that "Wisdom is justified of all her children." Those who are wisdom's children, the truly wise, will recognize an even wisdom in both

these lives; they will see that there are cases in whi a sohtary life is to be chosen for the sake of G while there are other cases in which a social life l comes our bounden duty. But it should be specia observed here that *that* Life which has been given us as a specimen of life for all was a social, a hum Life. Christ did not refuse to mix with the comm joys and common sorrows of humanity. He w present at the marriage feast, and by the bier of t widow's son. This, of the two lives, was the o which, because it was the most human, was the mo divine; the most rare, the most difficult, the most n ural — therefore the most Christ-like.

II. Let us notice, in the second place, the princip upon which the apostle founds this decision. It given in the text: "This I say, brethren, the time short; it remaineth, that both they that have wives b as though they had none," "for the fashion of thi world passeth away." Now, observe here, I pray yo the deep wisdom of this apostolic decision. In poin of fact, it comes to this. Christianity is a spirit, not law; it is a set of principles, not a set of rules; it i not a saying to us, You shall do this, you shall no do that; you shall use this particular dress, you shal not use that; you *shall* lead, you shall *not* lead married life. Christianity consists of principles, but the application of those principles is left to every man's individual conscience. With respect not only to this particular case, but to all the questions which had been brought before him, the apostle applies the same principle; the cases upon which he decided were many and various, but the large, broad principle

of his decision remains the same in all. You may marry, and you have not sinned; you may remain unmarried, and you do not sin; if you are invited to a heathen feast, you may go, or you may abstain from going; you may remain a slave, or you may become free; in *these things* Christianity does not consist. But what it does demand is this: that whether married or unmarried, whether a slave or free, in sorrow or in joy, you are to live in a spirit higher and loftier than that of the world.

The apostle gives us in the text two motives for this Christian unworldliness. The first motive which he lays down is this: "The time is short." You will observe how frequently, in the course of his remarks upon the questions proposed to him, the apostle turns, as it were, entirely away from the subject, as if worn out and wearied by the comparatively trivial character of the questions — as if this balancing of one earthly condition or advantage with another were but a solemn trifling compared with eternal things. And so, here, he seems to turn away from the question before him, and speaks of the shortness of time. "The time is short!"

Time is short in reference to two things. First, it is short in reference to the person who regards it. That mysterious thing, *Time*, is a matter of sensation, and not a reality; a modification merely of our own consciousness, and not actual existence: depending upon the flight of ideas — long to one, short to another. The span granted to the butterfly, the child of a single summer, may be long; that which is given to the cedar of Lebanon may be short. The shortness of time, therefore, is entirely relative — belonging t[illegible] not

to God. Time is short, in reference to *existence*, whether you look at it before or after. Time past seems nothing; time to come always seems long. We say this chiefly for the sake of the young. To them fifty or sixty years seems a treasure inexhaustible. But, my young brethren, ask the old man, trembling on the verge of the grave, what he thinks of Time and Life. He will tell you that the three-score years and ten, or even the hundred and twenty years of Jacob, are but "few and evil." And, therefore, if you are tempted to unbelief in respect to this question, we appeal to experience — experience alone can judge of its truth.

Once more, time is short with reference to its *opportunities*. For this is the emphatic meaning in the original — literally, "the opportunity is compressed, or shut in." Brethren, time may be long, and yet the opportunity may be very short. The sun in autumn may be bright and clear, but the seed which has not been sown until then will not vegetate. A man may have vigor and energy in manhood and maturity, but the work which ought to have been done in childhood and youth cannot be done in old age. A chance once gone in this world can never be recovered. Brother men, have you learned the meaning of yesterday? Do you rightly estimate the importance of to-day? — that there are duties to be done to-day which cannot be done to-morrow? This it is that throws so solemn a significance into your work. The time for working is short, therefore begin to-day; "for the night is coming when no man can work." Time is short in reference to *eternity*. It was especially with this reference that the text was written. In those days, and even by

the apostles themselves, the day of the Lord's appearances and second advent seemed much nearer than it was. They believed that it would occur during their own lives. And with this belief came the feeling which comes sometimes to all — "O, in comparison with that vast Hereafter, this little life shrivels into nothing! What is to-day worth, or its duties or its cares?" All deep minds have thought that. The thought of Time is solemn and awful to all minds in proportion to their depth; and in proportion as the mind is superficial, the thought has appeared little, and has been treated with levity. Brethren, let but a man possess himself of that thought — the deep thought of the brevity of time; this thought — that time is short, that eternity is long — and he has learned the first great secret of unworldliness.

The second motive which the apostle gives us is the changing character of the external world. "The fashion of this world passeth away;" — literally, "the *scenery* of this world," — a dramatic expression drawn from the Grecian stage. One of the deepest of modern thinkers has told us, in words often quoted, "All the world's a stage." And a deeper thinker than he, because inspired, had said long before, in the similar words of the text, "the *scenery* of this world passeth away." There are two ways in which this is true. First it is true with respect to all the things by which we are surrounded. It is only in poetry — the poetry of the Psalms, for example — that the hills are called "everlasting." Go to the side of the ocean which bounds our country, and watch the tide going out, bearing with it the sand which it has worn from the cliffs; the very boundaries of our land are changing;

they are not the same as they were when these words were written. Every day new relationships are forming around us; new circumstances are calling upon us to act, — to act manfully, firmly, decisively, and up to the occasion, remembering that an opportunity once gone is gone forever. Indulge not in vain regrets for the past, in vainer resolves for the future — act act in the present. Again, this is true with respect to ourselves. "The fashion of this world passeth away" in us. The feelings we have now are not those which we had in childhood. There has passed away a glory from the earth; the stars, the sun, the moon, the green fields, have lost their beauty and significance; nothing remains as it was, except their repeated impressions on the mind, the impressions of time, space, eternity, color, form; — these cannot alter, but all besides has changed. Our very minds alter. There is no bereavement so painful, no shock so terrible, but time will remove or alleviate. The keenest feeling in this world time wears out, at last; and our minds become like old monumental tablets, which have lost the inscription once graven deeply upon them.

In conclusion, we have to examine the nature of this Christian unworldliness, which is taught us in the text. The principle of unworldliness is stated in the latter portion of the text; in the former part the apostle makes an application of the principle to four cases of life. First, to cases of domestic relationship — "it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none." Secondly, to cases of sorrow — "and they that weep, as though they wept not." Thirdly, to cases of joy — "and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not." And, finally, to cases of the acquisi-

tion of worldly property—"and they that buy, as though they possessed not." Time will not allow us to go into these applications; we must confine ourselves to a brief consideration of the principle. The principle of Christian unworldliness, then, is this, to "use this world as not abusing it." Here Christianity takes its stand, in opposition to two contrary principles. The spirit of the world says, "Time is short, therefore use it while you have it; take your fill of pleasure while you may." A narrow religion says, "Time is short, therefore temporal things should receive no attention; do not weep, do not rejoice; it is beneath a Christian." In opposition to the narrow spirit of religion, Christianity says, "*Use* this world;" in opposition to the spirit of the world, Christianity says, "Do not *abuse* it." A distinct duty arises from this principle to use the world. While in the world we are citizens of the world; it is our *duty* to share its joys, to take our part in its sorrows, not to shrink from its difficulties, but to mix ourselves with its infinite opportunities. So that, if time be short, so far from that fact lessening their dignity or importance, it infinitely increases them; since upon these depend the destinies of our eternal being. Unworldliness is this,—to hold things from God in the perpetual conviction that they will not last: to have the world, and not to let the world have us; to be the world's masters, and not the world's slaves.

XV.

[Preached January 11, 1852.]

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH A FAMILY.

EPHESIANS iii. 14, 15. — "Our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

IN the verses immediately before the text the Apostle Paul has been speaking of what he calls a mystery — that is, a revealed secret; and the secret was this, that the Gentiles would be "fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ by the Gospel." It had been kept secret from the former ages and generations; it was a secret which the Jew had not suspected — had not even dreamt of. It appeared to him to be his duty to keep as far as possible from the Gentile. Circumcision, which taught him the duty of separation from the Gentile spirit, and Gentile practices, seemed to him to teach hatred towards Gentile *persons*, until, at length, in the good pleasure and providence of God, in the fulness of time, through the instrumentality of men whose *hearts* rather than whose intellects were inspired by God, the truth came out distinct and clear, that God was the Father of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, "for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him." (Rom. x. 12.) In the progress of the months, my Christian

brethren, we have arrived again at that period of the year in which our Church calls upon us to commemorate the Epiphany, or manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, and we know not that in the whole range of Scripture we could find a passage which more distinctly and definitely than this brings before us the spirit in which it is incumbent upon us to enter upon this duty.

In considering this passage we shall divide it into these two branches:

I. The definition which the Apostle Paul here gives of the Church of Christ.

II. The Name by which this Church is named.

I. In the first place, let us consider the definition given by the Apostle Paul of the Christian Church, taken in its entirety. It is this — "the whole family in heaven and earth." But, in order to understand this fully, it will be necessary for us to break it up into its different terms.

1. First of all, it is taught by this definition that the Church of Christ is a *society founded upon natural affinities* — a "family." A family is built on affinities which are natural, not artificial; it is not a combination, but a society. In ancient times an association of interest combined men in one guild or corporation for protecting the common persons in that corporation from oppression. In modern times identity of political creed or opinion has bound men together in one league, in order to establish those political principles which appeared to them of importance. Similarity of taste has united men together in what is called an association or a society, in order, by this means, to

attain more completely the ends of that science t which they had devoted themselves. But, as thes have been raised artificially, so their end is, inevitably dissolution. Society passes on, and guilds and corpo rations die; principles are established, and league become dissolved: tastes change, and then the associa tion or society breaks up, and comes to nothing. I is upon another principle altogether that that whicl we call a family, or true society, is formed. It is not built upon similarity of taste, nor identity of opinion, but upon affinities of nature. You do not *choose* who shall be your brother; you cannot exclude your mother or your sister; it does not depend upon choice or arbitrary opinion at all, but is founded upon the eternal nature of things. And precisely in the same way is the Christian Church formed—upon natural affinity, and not upon artificial combination. "The family, the whole family in heaven and earth;" not made up of those who *call* themselves brethren, but of those who *are* brethren; not founded merely upon the principles of combination, but upon the principles of affinity. That is not a church, or a family, or a society, which is made up by men's choice; as when, in the upper classes of life, men of fashion unite together, selecting their associates from their own *class*, and from what is technically called a society: it is a combination, if you will; but a society it is not, a family it is not, a Church of Christ it cannot be. And, again, when the Baptists or the Independents, or any other sectarians, unite themselves with men holding the same faith and entertaining the same opinions, there may be a *sect*, a *combination*, a *persuasion*, but a *Church* there cannot be. And so, again, when the Jew,

in time past, linked himself with the Jew, with those of the same nation, there you have what in ancient times was called Judaism, and in modern is called Hebraicism — a system, a combination, but not a Church. The Church rises ever out of the family. First of all, in the good providence of God, there is the family, then the tribe, then the nation; and then the nation merges itself into humanity. And the nation which refuses to merge its nationality in Humanity, to lose itself in the general interests of mankind, is left behind, and loses almost its religious nationality, like the Jewish people.

Such is the first principle. A man is born of the same family, and is not made such by an appointment, or by arbitrary choice.

2. Another thing which is taught by this definition is this, that the Church of Christ is a whole, made up of manifold diversities. We are told here it is "the *whole* family," taking into it the great and good of ages past, now in heaven; and also the struggling, the humble, and the weak, now existing upon earth. Here, again the analogy holds good between the Church and the family. Never more than in the family is the true entirety of our nature seen. Observe how all the diversities of human condition and character manifest themselves in the family. First of all, there are the two opposite poles of masculine and feminine, which contain within them the entire of our humanity — which together, not separately, make up the whole of man. Then there are the *diversities in the degrees and kinds of affection*. For, when we speak of family affection, we must remember that it is made up of many diversities. There is nothing more different than the love

which the sister bears towards the brother, compared with that which the brother bears towards the sister. The affection which a man bears towards his father is quite distinct from that which he feels towards his mother; it is something quite different towards his sister; totally diverse again towards his brother. And then there are *diversities of character*. First, the mature wisdom and stern integrity of the father; then the exuberant tenderness of the mother. And then one is brave and enthusiastic, another thoughtful, and another tender. One is remarkable for being full of rich humor; another is sad, mournful, even melancholy. Again, besides these, there are *diversities of condition in life*. First, there is the heir, sustaining the name and honor of the family; then, perchance, the soldier, in whose career all the anxiety and solicitude of the family are centred; then the man of business, to whom they look up, trusting his advice, expecting his counsel; lastly, perhaps, there is the invalid, from the very cradle trembling between life and death, drawing out all the sympathies and anxieties of each member of the family, and so uniting them all more closely, from their having one common point of sympathy and solicitude. Now, you will observe that these are not accidental, but absolutely essential to the idea of a family; for so far as any one of them is lost, so far the family is incomplete. A family made up of one sex alone, all brothers and no sisters, or in which all are devoted to one pursuit, or in which there is no diversity of temper and dispositions, — the same monotonous repeated identity, a sameness in the type of character, — this is not a family; it is only the fragment of a family.

And, precisely in the same way, all these diversities of character and condition are necessary to constitute and complete the idea of a Christian Church. For, as in ages past it was the delight of the Church to canonize one particular class of virtues, — as, for instance, purity or martyrdom, — so now, in every age, and in every individual bosom, there is a tendency to canonize, or honor, or reckon as Christian, only one or two classes of Christian qualities. For example, if you were to ask in the present day where you should find a type of the Christian character, many, in all probability, would point you to the man who keeps the Sabbath-day, is regular in his attendance upon the services of the Church, who loves to hear the Christian sermon. This is a phase of Christian character — that which is essentially and peculiarly the *feminine* type of religion. But is there in God's Church to be found no place for that type which is rather masculine than feminine? — which not in litanies or in psalm-singing does the will of God, but by struggling for principles, and contending for the truth — *that* life whose prayer is action, whose aspiration is continual effort? Or, again, in every age, amongst all men, in the history of almost every individual, at one time or another, there has been a tendency towards that which has been emphatically named in modern times *hero-worship*, leading us to an admiration of the more singular, powerful, noble qualities of humanity. And wherever this tendency to hero-worship exists, there will be found side by side with it a tendency to undervalue and depreciate excellences of an opposite character — the humble, meek, retiring qualities. But it is precisely for these that the Church of Christ finds place. "Blessed are the

meek, blessed are the merciful, blessed are they th hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed are th poor in spirit." In God's world there is a place f the wren and the violet, just as truly as there is f the eagle and the rose. In the Church of God the is a place — and that the noblest — for Dorcas makir garments for the poor, and for Mary sitting at the fe of Jesus, just as truly as there is for Elijah confoun ing a false religion by his noble opposition, for Jol the Baptist making a king tremble on his throne, for the Apostle Paul "compassing sea and land" l his wisdom and his heroic deeds.

Once more, there are ages, as well as times in o own individual experience, when we set up chari as if it were the one only Christian character. A wherever this tendency is found there will be found the same time, and side by side with it, a tendency admire the spurious form of charity, which is a sen ment, and not a virtue; which can sympathize wi crime, but not with law; which can be tender to s ages, but has no respect, no care, for national hon And, therefore, does this principle of the Apostle Pa call upon us to esteem also another form or type character, and the opposite one; that which is rema able for — in which predominates — not so much chari as *justice;* that which was seen in the warriors a prophets of old, who, perchance, had a more stro recoil from vice than sympathy with virtue; whose dignation towards that which is wrong and hypoc ical was more intense than their love for that which good: the material, the character, out of which t reformer and the prophet, those who are called to great works on earth, are made. The Church

Christ takes not on one individual form of goodness merely, but every form of excellence that can adorn humanity. Nor is this wonderful when we remember who He was from whom this Church was named. It was He in whom centred all excellence in righteousness which was entire and perfect. But when we speak of the perfection of righteousness, let us remember that it is made not of one exaggerated character, but of a true harmony, a due proportion of all virtues united. In Him were found, therefore, that tenderness towards sinners which had no sympathy with sin; that humility which could be dignified, and was yet united with self-respect; that simplicity which is ever to be met with side by side with true majesty; that love which could weep over Jerusalem at the very moment when He was pronouncing its doom: that truth and justice which appeared to stand as a protection to those who had been oppressed, at the same time that He scathed with indignant invective the Pharisees of the then existing Jews.

There are two—only two—*perfect* humanities. One has existed already in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ; the other is to be found only in the collective Church. Once, only once, has God given a perfect representation of Himself—"the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person." And if we ask again for a perfect humanity, the answer is, it is not in this Church or in that Church, or in this man or in that man, in this age or in that age, but in the collective blended graces, and beauties and humanities, which are found in every age, in all Churches, but not in every separate man. So, at least, Paul has taught us: "Till we *all* come" *collectively* not sep-

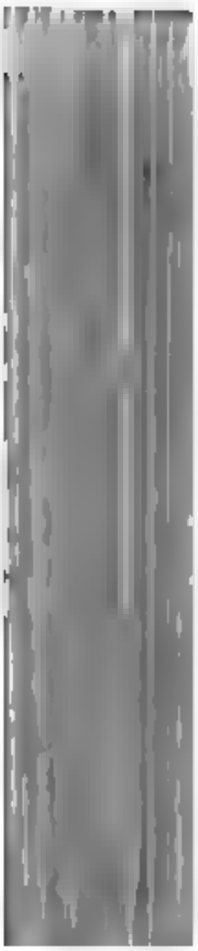
arately — "in the unity of the faith, and of the know edge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man" — i other words, to a perfect *humanity* — "unto the mea ure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. i 13.)

3. The last thing which is taught us by this defin tion is, that the Church of Christ is a society which forever shifting its locality, and altering its forms. is the *whole* Church, "the *whole* family in heaven an earth." So, then, those who were on earth, and a now in heaven, are yet members of the same famil still. Those who had their home here, now have there. Let us see what it is that we should learn fro this doctrine. It is this, that the dead are not lost t us. There is a sense in which the departed are our more than they were before. There is a sense in whic the Apostle Paul, or John, the good and great of age past, belong to this age more than to that in whic they lived, but in which they were not understood; i which the commonplace and every-day part of thei lives hindered the brightness, and glory, and beauty, o their character, from shining forth. So it is in th family. It is possible for men to live in the sam house, and partake of the same meal from day to day and from year to year, and yet remain strangers t each other, — mistaking each other's feelings, not com prehending each other's character; and it is only whe the Atlantic rolls between, and half a hemisphere i interposed, that we learn how dear they are to us how all our life is bound up in deep anxiety with thei existence. Therefore it is the Christian feels that th family is not broken. Think you that family can break or end? — that because the chair is empty, therefore he

your child, is no more? It may be so with the coarse, the selfish, the unbelieving, the superstitious; but the eye of faith sees there only a transformation. He is not there; he is risen. You see the place where he was, but he has passed to heaven. So, at least, the parental heart of David felt of old,—"by faith, and not by sight,"—when speaking of his infant child. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Once more: the Church of Christ is a society ever altering and changing its external forms. "The *whole* family," – the Church of the Patriarchs, and of ages before them,—and yet the same family. Remember, I pray you, the diversities of form through which, in so many ages and generations, this Church has passed. Consider the difference there was between the patriarchal Church of the time of Abraham and Isaac, and its condition under David; or the difference between the Church so existing and its state in the days of the apostles; and the marvellous difference between that and the same Church four or five centuries later; or, once again, the difference between that, externally one, and the Church as it exists in the present day, broken into so many fragments. Yet, diversified as these states may be, they are not more so than the various stages of a family.

There is a time when the children are all in one room, around their mother's knee. Then comes a time, still further on, when the first separation takes place, and some are leaving their home to prepare for after-life. Afterwards, when all in their different professions, trades, or occupations, are separate. At last comes the time when some are gone. And, perchance, the two survivors meet, at last,—an old, gray-haired



ceive, for instance, the feelings of a pious
Christianity entered this world; when all hi
system was broken up — the Temple servic
to a violent end; when that polity which h
was to redeem and ennoble the world was
as a broken and useless thing. Must they
been as gloomy and as dreary as those of the
when He was dead who they trusted "sh
redeemed Israel"? In both cases the body
or was altered — the spirit had arisen.

And precisely so it is with our fears and m
apprehensions now. Institutions pass, Chur
old forms change, and high-minded and good
to these as if *they* were the only things by w
could regenerate the world. Christianity a
some men to be effete and worn-out. Men
look back upon the times of Venn, and Ne
Scott, comparing the degeneracy of their
ants with the men of those days, lose heart
things were going wrong. "Things are r
say, "as they were in our younger days"

stitions and effete creeds, is just as unwise as is the grief of the mother mourning over the form which was once her child. She cannot separate her affection from that form. Those hands, those limbs, those features,—are they not her child? The true answer is, her child is not there — it is only the form of her child. And it is as unwise to mourn over the decay of those institutions — the change of human forms — as it was unwise in Jonah to mourn with that passionate sorrow over the decay of the gourd which had sheltered him from the heat of the noontide sun. A worm had eaten the root of the gourd, and it was gone. But He who made the gourd the shelter to the weary, the shadow of those who are oppressed by the noontide heat of life, lived on — Jonah's God. And so, brethren, all things change — all things outward change and alter: but the God of the Church lives on. The Church of God remains under fresh forms — the one, holy, entire family, in heaven and earth.

II. Pass we on now, in the second place, to consider the name by which this Church is named. "Our Lord Jesus Christ," the apostle says, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

Now, every one familiar with the Jewish modes of thought and expression will allow here that *name* is but another word to express being, actuality, and existence. So, when Jacob desired to know the character and nature of Jehovah, he said, "Tell me now, I beseech thee, thy *name*." When the apostle here says, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in

heaven and earth is *named*," it is but another way saying that it is He on whom the Church depends who has given it substantive existence — withc whom it could not be at all. It is but another way saying what he has expressed elsewhere — that "the is none other name under heaven given among me whereby we may be saved." Let us not lose ourselv in vague generalities. Separate from Christ, there no salvation; there can be no Christianity. Now, l us understand what we mean by this. Let us clear define and enter into the meaning of the words v use. When we say that our Lord Jesus Christ is He " whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named we mean that the very being of the Church depen on Christ — that it could not be without Him. Nov the Church of Christ depends upon these three things first, the recognition of a common Father; secondl of a common Humanity; and thirdly, of a commo Sacrifice.

1. First, the recognition of a common *Father*. Th is the sacred truth proclaimed by the Epiphany. Go revealed in Christ — not the Father of the Jew only but also of the Gentile. The Father of a "*whole* fam ily." Not the partial Father, loving one alone — th elder — but the younger son besides; the outcas prodigal, who had spent his living with harlots and sin ners, but the child still, and the child of a Father's love. Our Lord taught this in His own blessed prayer — "*Our* Father;" and, as we lose the meaning of that single word *our*, as we say *my* Father — the Father of *me* and of *my* faction — of *me* and *my* fellow-be lievers — *my* Anglicanism or *my* Judaism — be it what it may — instead of *our* Father — the Father of

the outcast, the profligate, of all who choose to claim a Father's love, — so we lose the meaning of the lesson which the Epiphany was designed to teach, and the possibility of building up a family to God.

2. The recognition of a common Humanity. He from whom the Church is named took upon Him not the nature merely of the noble, of kings, or of the intellectual philosopher — but of the beggar, the slave, the outcast, the infidel, the sinner, and the nature of every one struggling in various ways. Let us learn, then, brother men, that we shall have no family in God, unless we learn the deep truth of our common humanity, shared in by the servant and the sinner, as well as the sovereign. Without this we shall have no Church — no family in God.

3. Lastly, the Church of Christ proceeds out of, and rests upon, the belief in a common Sacrifice. * *

* * * * * * * *

There are three ways in which the human race hitherto has endeavored to construct itself into a family: first, by the sword: secondly, by an ecclesiastical system; and thirdly, by trade or commerce. First, by the sword. The Assyrian, the Persian, the Greek, and the Roman, have done their work — in itself, a most valuable and important one; but, so far as the formation of mankind into a family was the object aimed at, the work of the sword has done almost nothing. Then there was the ecclesiastical system — the grand attempt of the Church of Rome to organize all men into one family, with one ecclesiastical, visible, earthly head. Being Protestants, it is not necessary for us to

state our conviction that this attempt has been a signal and complete failure. We now come to the system of commerce and trade. We are told that that which chivalry and honor could not do, which an ecclesiastical system could not do, personal interest *will* do. Trade is to bind men together into one family. When they feel it their *interest* to be one, they will be brothers. Brethren, that which is built on selfishness cannot stand. The system of personal interest must be shivered into atoms. Therefore, we, who have observed the ways of God in the past, are waiting in quiet but awful expectation until He shall confound this system, as He has confounded those which have gone before. And it may be effected by convulsions more terrible and more bloody than the world has yet seen. While men are talking of peace, and of the great progress of civilization, there is heard in the distance the noise of armies gathering rank on rank; east and west, north and south, are rolling towards us the crushing thunders of universal war.

Therefore, there is but one other system to be tried, and that is the Cross of Christ — a system that is not to be built upon selfishness, nor upon blood, nor upon personal interest, but upon Love. Love, not self; the Cross of Christ, and not the mere working out of the ideas of individual humanity.

One word only, in conclusion. Upon this, the great truth of the Epiphany, the apostle founds a prayer. He prays: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ

may dwell in your hearts by faith." This manifestation of joy and good to the Gentiles was, according to him, the great mystery of Love. A Love, brighter, deeper, wider, higher, than the largest human heart had ever yet dreamed of. But the apostle tells us it is, after all, but a glimpse of the love of God. How should we learn it more? How should we comprehend the whole meaning of the Epiphany? By sitting down to read works of theology? The Apostle Paul tells us — No. You must love, in order to understand love. "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Brother men, one act of charity will teach us more of the love of God than a thousand sermons; one act of unselfishness, of real self-denial, the putting forth of one loving feeling to the outcast and "those who are out of the way," will tell us more of the meaning of the Epiphany than whole volumes of the wisest writers on theology.

XVI.

[Preached January 25, 1852.]

THE LAW OF CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE.

. CORINTHIANS viii. 7–13. — "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some, with conscience of the idol, unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat are we the better; neither if we eat not are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

WE have already divided this chapter into two branches, — the former portion of it containing the difference between Christian knowledge and secular knowledge, and the second portion containing the apostolic exposition of the law of Christian conscience. The first of these we endeavored to expound last Sunday, but it may be well briefly to recapitulate the principles of that discourse in a somewhat different form. Corinth, as we all know and remember, was a city built on the sea-coast, having a large and free communication

with all foreign nations; and there was also within it, and going on amongst its inhabitants, a free interchange of thought, and a vivid power of communicating the philosophy and truths of those days to each other. Now, it is plain that to a society in such a state, and to minds so educated, the Gospel of Christ must have presented a peculiar attraction, presenting itself to them, as it did, as a law of Christian liberty. And so in Corinth the Gospel had "free course and was glorified," and was received with great joy by almost all men, and by minds of all classes and all sects; and a large number of these attached themselves to the teaching of the Apostle Paul, as the most accredited expounder of Christianity, the "royal law of liberty." But it seems, from what we read in this epistle, that a large number of these men received Christianity as a thing intellectual, and that alone, and not as a thing which touched the conscience, and swayed and purified the affections. And so this liberty became to them almost *all*; they ran into sin or went to extravagance; they rejoiced in their freedom from the superstitions, the ignorances, and the scruples, which bound their weaker brethren; but had no charity — none of that intense charity which characterized the Apostle Paul, for those still struggling in the delusions and darkness from which they themselves were free. More than that, they demanded their right, their Christian liberty of expressing their opinions in the Church, merely for the sake of *exhibiting* the Christian graces and spiritual gifts which had been showered upon them so largely; until, by degrees, those very assemblies became a lamentable exhibition of their own depravity, and led to numerous irregularities, which we find severely

rebuked by the Apostle Paul. Their women, rejoi
in the emancipation which had been given to the C
tian community, laid aside the old habits of attire w
had been consecrated so long by Grecian and Je
custom, and appeared with their heads uncovere
the Christian community. Still further than that
Lord's Supper exhibited an absence of all solem
and seemed more a meeting for licentious gratifica
where "one was hungry, and another was drunken
a place in which earthly drunkenness, the mere e
ment of the appetites, had taken the place of Chri
charity towards each other. And the same feelin
this love of mere liberty, liberty in itself — manif
itself in many other directions. Holding by this
dom, their philosophy taught that the body — that i
flesh — was the only cause of sin; that the soul was
and pure; and that, therefore, to be free from
body would be entire, perfect, Christian ... would
And so came in that strange, wrong doctrine, exhi
in Corinth, where immortality was taught sep
from, and in opposition to, the doctrine of the resu
tion. And afterwards they went on with their co
sions about liberty, to maintain that the body, jus
by the sacrifice of Christ, was no longer capabl
sin; and that in the evil which was done by the
the soul had taken no part. And, therefore, sin
to them but as a name, from which a Christian
science was to be freed altogether. So that, wher
of their number had fallen into grievous sin, and
committed fornication, "such as was not so muc
named among the Gentiles," so far from being
bled by it, they were "puffed up," as if they
exhibiting to the world an enlightened, true, pe

Christianity, separate from all prejudices. To such a society, and to such a state of mind, the Apostle Paul preached, in all its length, breadth, and fulness, the humbling doctrines of the Cross of Christ. He taught that knowledge was one thing, that charity was *another* thing; that "knowledge puffeth up, but charity buildeth up." He reminded them that love was the perfection of knowledge. In other words, his teaching came to this: there are two kinds of knowledge — the one, the knowledge of the intellect; the other, the knowledge of the heart. Intellectually, God never can be known; He must be known by Love; for, "if any man love God, the same is known of Him." Here, then, we have arrived, in another way, at precisely the same conclusion at which we arrived last Sunday. Here are two kinds of knowledge — secular knowledge and Christian knowledge; and Christian knowledge is this: to know

different n

Let us now consider the remainder of the chapter, which treats of the law of Christian conscience. You will observe that it divides itself into two branches, the first containing an exposition of the law itself, and the second the Christian applications which flow out of this exposition.

I. The way in which the apostle expounds the law of Christian conscience is this: Guilt is contracted by the soul, in so far as it sins against and transgresses the law of God, by doing that which it believes to be wrong; not so much what *is* wrong as what *appears to it* to be wrong. This is the doctrine distinctly laid down in the 7th and 8th verses. The apostle tells the Corinthians — these strong-minded Corinthians —

that the superstitions of their weaker brethren wer unquestionably wrong. "Meat," he says, "commendet us not to God; for neither if we eat are we the better neither if we eat not are we the worse." He the tells them further, that "there is not in every ma that knowledge; for some, with conscience of the ido eat it as a thing offered unto an idol." Here, then, i an ignorant, mistaken, ill-informed conscience; an yet he goes on to tell them that this conscience, s ill-informed, yet binds the possessor of it: "and thei conscience, being weak, is defiled." For example there could be no harm in eating the flesh of an anim that had been offered to an idol or false god; fc a false god is nothing, and it is impossible for it t have contracted positive defilement by being offere to that which is a positive and absolute negation. An yet, if any man thought it wrong to eat such flesh, t him it *was* wrong: for in that act there would be deliberate act of transgression, a deliberate prefe ence of that which was mere enjoyment to that whic was apparently, though it may be only apparentl sanctioned by the law of God. And so it would carr with it all the disobedience, all the guilt, and all th misery, which belong to the doing of an act altogethe wrong; or, as St. Paul expresses it, the conscienc would become defiled.

Here, then, we arrive at the first distinction — th distinction between absolute and relative right an wrong. Absolute right and absolute wrong, like abs lute truth, can each be but *one* and unalterable in th sight of God. The one absolute *right* — the charit of God and the sacrifice of Christ; this, from eternit to eternity, must be the sole measure of eternal righ

But human right or human wrong — that is, the merit or demerit of any action done by any particular man — must be measured, not by that absolute standard, but as a matter relative to his particular circumstances, the state of the age in which he lives, and his own knowledge of right and wrong. For we come into this world with a moral sense; or, to speak more Christianly, with a conscience. And yet that will tell us but very little distinctly. It tells us broadly that which is right and that which is wrong, so that every child can understand this. That charity and self-denial are right — this we see recognized in almost every nation. But the boundaries of these two, — when and how far self-denial is right, what are the bounds of charity, — this it is for different circumstances yet to bring out and determine. And so it will be found that there is a different standard among different nations, and in different ages. That, for example, which was the standard among the Israelites in the earlier ages, and before their settlement in Canaan, was very different from the higher and truer standard of right and wrong recognized by the later prophets. And the standard in the third and fourth centuries after Christ was truly and unquestionably an entirely different one from that recognized in the nineteenth century among ourselves. Let me not be mistaken. I do not say that right and wrong are merely conventional, or merely chronological or geographical, or that they vary with latitude and longitude. I do not say that there ever was or ever can be a nation so utterly blinded and perverted in its moral sense as to acknowledge that which is wrong, seen and known to be wrong, as right; or, on the

other hand, to profess that which is seen and under stood as right, to be wrong. But what I do say i this: that the form and aspect in which different deed appear so vary, that there will be forever a chang and alteration in men's opinions, and that which i really most generous may seem most base, and tha which is really most base may appear most generou So, for example, as I have already said, there are tw things universally recognized, recognized as right b every man whose conscience is not absolutely pe verted, — charity and self-denial. The charity of Go the sacrifice of Christ, — these are the two gran leading principles of the Gospel; and in some for or other you will find these lying at the roots of eve profession and state of feeling in almost every ag But the form in which these appear will vary with the gradations which are to be found between t lowest savage state and the highest and most enligh ened Christianity.

For example, in ancient Israel the law of love w expounded thus: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, a hate thine enemy." Among the American Indians a at the Cape, the only homage, perchance, given self-denial was the strange admiration given to th prisoner of war who bore with unflinching fortitu the torture of his country's enemies. In ancient In the same principle was exhibited, but in a mo strange and perverted manner. The homage the given to self-denial, self-sacrifice, was this: that t highest form of religion was considered to be th exhibited by the devotee who sat in a tree until t birds had built their nests in his hair; until his na like those of the king of Babylon, had grown li

birds' talons, until they had grown into his hands, and he became absorbed into the Divinity. We will take another instance, and one better known. In ancient Sparta it was the custom to teach children to steal. And here there would seem to be a contradiction to our proposition — here it would seem as if right and wrong were matters merely conventional; for surely stealing can never be anything but wrong. But, if we look deeper, we shall see that there is no contradiction here. It was not stealing which was admired; the child was punished if the theft was discovered; but it was the dexterity which was admired, and that because it was a warlike virtue, necessary, it may be, to a people in continual rivalry with their neighbors. It was not that honesty was despised and dishonesty esteemed, but that honesty and dishonesty were made subordinate to that which appeared to them of higher importance, namely, the duty of concealment. And so we come back to the principle which we laid down at first. In every age, among all nations, the same broad principle remains; but the application of it varies. The conscience may be ill-informed, and in this sense only are right and wrong conventional, varying with latitude and longitude, depending upon chronology and geography.

The principle laid down by the Apostle Paul is this: A man will be judged, not by the abstract law of God, not by the rule of absolute right, but much rather by the relative law of conscience. This he states most distinctly — looking at the question on both sides. That which seems to a man to be right is, in a certain sense, right to him; and that which seems to a man to be wrong, in a certain sense is

wrong to him. For example: he says in his Epist to the Romans (v. 14) that "sin is not imputed wh there is no law;" in other words, if a man does n really know a thing to be wrong, there is a sense which, if not right to him, it ceases to be so wrong it would otherwise be. With respect to the other these sides, however, the case is still more distin and plain. Here, in the judgment which the apos delivers in the parallel chapter of the Epistle to t Romans (the 14th), he says: "I know, and am p suaded of the Lord Jesus, that there is nothi unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth a thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." In oth words, whatever may be the abstract merits of t question, — however in God's jurisprudence any p ticular act may stand, — to you, thinking it to be wro it manifestly *is* wrong, and your conscience will gath round it a stain of guilt if you do it. In order understand this more fully, let us take a few instanc There is a difference between *truth* and *veraci* Veracity — mere veracity — is a small, poor thi Truth is something greater and higher. Veracity merely the correspondence between some particu statement and facts; truth is the correspondence b tween a man's whole soul and reality. It is possib for a man to say that which, unknown to him, is fal and yet he may be true; because, if deprived of tru he is deprived of it unwillingly. It is possible, on t other hand, for a man to utter veracities, and yet the very time that he is uttering those veracities to false to himself, to his brother, and to his God. O of the most signal instances of this is to be seen the Book of Job. Most of what Job's friends said

him were veracious statements. Much of what Job said for himself was unveracious and mistaken. And yet those veracities of theirs were so torn from all connection with fact and truth, that they became falsehoods; and they were, as has been said, nothing more than "orthodox liars" in the sight of God. On the other hand, Job, blundering perpetually, and falling into false doctrine, was yet a true man — searching for and striving after the truth; and if deprived of it for a time, deprived of it with all his heart and soul unwillingly. And therefore it was that at last the Lord appeared out of the whirlwind to confound the men of mere veracity, and to stand by and support the honor of the heartily true.

Let us apply the principle further. It is a matter of less importance that a man should state true views, than that he should state views truly. We will put this in its strongest form. Unitarianism is false — Trinitarianism is true. But yet, in the sight of God, and with respect to a man's eternal destinies hereafter, it would surely be better for him earnestly, honestly, truly, to hold the doctrines of Unitarianism, than in a cowardly or indifferent spirit, or influenced by authority, or from considerations of interest, or for the sake of lucre, to hold the doctrines of Trinitarianism. For instance: Not many years ago the Church of Scotland was severed into two great divisions, and gave to this age a marvellous proof that there is still amongst us the power of living faith, when five hundred ministers gave up all that earth holds dear, — position in the church they had loved, friendships and affections formed and consecrated by long fellowship in its communion, and almost their hopes of gaining a

livelihood,—rather than assert a principle which seem to them to be a false one. Now, my brethren, sure the question in such a case for us to consider is n this merely, whether of the two sections held t abstract *right*, held the principle in its integrity—b surely far rather this: who on either side was true the light within, true to God, true to the truth as G had revealed it to his soul.

Now, it is precisely upon this principle that we a enabled to indulge a Christian hope that many those who in ancient times were persecutors, f example, may yet be justified at the bar of Chri Nothing can make persecution right; it is wron essentially, eternally wrong, in the sight of God. A yet, if a man sincerely and assuredly thinks that Chr has laid upon him a command to persecute with fi and sword, it is surely better that he should, in spi of all feelings of tenderness and compassion, cast asi the dearest affections at the command of his Redeem than that he should, in mere laxity and tenderne turn aside from what seemed to him to be his dut At least, this appears to be the opinion of the Apost Paul. He tells us that he was "a blasphemer and persecutor and injurious;" that "he did many thin contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth;" th "being exceedingly mad against the disciples, he pe secuted them even unto strange cities." But he te us further, that "for this cause he obtained merc because he did it ignorantly in unbelief." Now, take case precisely opposite. In ancient times the Jew did that by which it appeared to them that they woul contract defilement and guilt—they spared the live of the enemies which they had taken in battle. Bretl

ren, the eternal law is, that charity is right, and that law is eternally right which says, "Thou shalt love thine enemy." And had the Jews acted upon this principle, they would have done well to spare their enemies; but they did it thinking it to be wrong, transgressing that law which commanded them to slay their idolatrous enemies — not from generosity, but in cupidity — not from charity, but from lax zeal. And so doing, the act was altogether wrong.

II. Such is the apostle's exposition of the law of Christian conscience. Let us now, in the second place, consider the applications, both of a personal and of a public nature, which arise out of it.

1. The first application is a personal one. It is this: Do what *seems* to *you* to be right: it is only so that you will at last learn by the grace of God to see clearly what *is* right. A man thinks within himself that it is God's law and God's will that he should act thus and thus. There is nothing possible for us to say, there is no advice for us to give, but this: "You *must* so act." He is responsible for the opinions he holds, and still more for the way in which he arrived at them — whether in a slothful and selfish, or in an honest and truth-seeking manner; but, being now his soul's convictions, you can give no other law than this: "You must obey your conscience." For no man's conscience gets so seared by doing what is wrong unknowingly, as by doing that which appears to be wrong to his conscience. The Jews' consciences did not get seared by their slaying the Canaanites, but they did become seared by their taking to do what appeared to them to be right. Therefore,

woe to you if you do what others think right, inste of obeying the dictates of your own conscience; w to you if you allow authority, or prescription, fashion, or influence, or any other human thing, interfere with that awful and sacred thing, respon bility. "Every man," said the apostle, "must give account of himself to God."

2. The second application of this principle h reference to others. No doubt, to the large, fre enlightened mind of the Apostle Paul, all the scruples and superstitions must have seemed mea trivial, and small indeed. It was a matter to him far less importance that truth should be *establishe* than that it should be arrived at truly; a matter far less importance, even, that right should be don than that right should be done rightly. Conscien was far more sacred to him than even liberty; it w to him a prerogative far more precious to assert t rights of Christian conscience, than to magnify t privileges of Christian liberty. The scruple may small and foolish; but it may be impossible to upro the scruple without tearing up the feeling of the san tity of conscience, and of reverence to the law God, associated with this scruple. And therefore t Apostle Paul counsels these men to abridge the Christian liberty, and not to eat of those things whic had been sacrificed to idols, but to have compassi upon the scruples of their weaker brethren. An this, for two reasons. The first of these is a me reason of Christian feeling. It might cause exquisit pain to sensitive minds to see those things whic appeared to them to be wrong done by Christia brethren. Now, you may take a parallel case. It ma

be, if you will, mere superstition to bow at the name of Jesus. It may be, and no doubt is, founded upon a mistaken interpretation of that passage in the Epistle to the Philippians (ii. 10), which says that "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." But there are many congregations in which this has been the long-established rule, and there are many Christians who would feel pained to see such a practice discontinued — as if it implied a declension from the reverence due to "that name which is above every name." Now, what in this case is the Christian duty? Is it this — to stand upon our Christian liberty? Or is it not rather this — to comply with a prejudice which is manifestly a harmless one, rather than give pain to a Christian brother? Take another case. It may be a mistaken scruple; but there is no doubt that it causes much pain to many Christians to see a carriage used on the Lord's day. But you, with higher views of the spirit of Christianity, who know that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not a man for the Sabbath," — who can enter more deeply into the truth taught by our blessed Lord, that every day is to be dedicated to Him and consecrated to His service, — upon the high principle of Christian liberty you can use your carriage — you can exercise your liberty. But if there are Christian brethren to whom this would give pain, then I humbly ask you, but most earnestly, What is the duty here? Is it not this — to abridge your Christian liberty, and to go through rain, and mud and snow, rather than give pain to one Christian conscience? To give one more instance. The words, and garb, and customs, of that sect of Christians called Quakers, may be formal enough; founded no doubt, as

in the former case, upon a mistaken interpretation of a passage in the Bible. But they are at least harmless, and have long been associated with the simplicity, and benevolence, and Christian humbleness, of this body of Christians, the followers of one who, three hundred years ago, set out upon the glorious enterprise of making all men friends. Now, would it be Christian, or would it not rather be something more than unchristian — would it not be gross rudeness and coarse unfeelingness — to treat such words and habits, and customs, with anything but respect and reverence?

Further: the apostle enjoined this duty upon the Corinthian converts, of abridging their Christian liberty, not merely because it might give pain to indulge it, but also because it might even lead their brethren into sin. For, if any man should eat of the flesh offered to an idol, feeling himself justified by his conscience, it were well: but if any man, overborne by authority or interest, were to do this, not according to conscience, but against it, there would be a distinct and direct act of disobedience — a conflict between his sense of right and the gratification of his appetite or the power of influence; and then his compliance would as much damage his conscience and moral sense as if the act had been wrong in itself.

Now, in the personal application of these remarks there are three things which we have to say. The first is this: Distinguish, I pray you, between the tenderness for a brother's conscience and mere time-serving. This same apostle, whom we here see so gracefully giving way upon the ground of expediency when Christian principles were left entire, will

the same who stood firm and strong as a rock when anything was demanded which trenched upon Christian principle. When some required, as a matter of necessity for salvation, that these converts should be circumcised, the apostle says, "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour!" It was not indifference, it was not cowardice, it was not the mere love of peace, purchased by the sacrifice of principle, that prompted this counsel; but it was Christian love — that delicate and Christian love which dreads to tamper with the sanctities of a brother's conscience.

2. The second thing we have to say is this — that this abridgment of their liberty is a duty more especially incumbent upon all who are possessed of influence. There are some men — happily for themselves, we may say — who are so insignificant that they can take their course quietly in the valleys of life, and who can exercise the fullest Christian liberty without giving pain to others. But it is the price which all who are possessed of influence must pay, that their acts must be measured, not in themselves, but according to their influence on others. So, my Christian brethren, to bring this matter home to every-day experience and common life, if the landlord uses his authority and influence to induce his tenant to vote against his conscience, it may be he has secured one voice to the principle which is right, or, at all events, to that which seemed to him to be right, but he has gained that single voice at the sacrifice and expense of a brother's soul. Or, again, if, for the sake of insuring personal politeness and attention, the rich man puts a gratuity into the hand of a servant of some

company which has forbidden him to receive it, he gains the attention, he insures the politeness, but he gains it at the sacrifice and expense of a man and a Christian brother.

3. The last remark which we have to make is this: How possible it is to mix together the vigor of a masculine and manly intellect with the tenderness and charity which is taught by the Gospel of Christ! No man ever breathed so freely when on earth the air and atmosphere of heaven as the Apostle Paul, — no man ever soared so high above all prejudices, narrowness, littlenesses, scruples, as he; and yet no man ever bound himself as Paul bound himself to the ignorance, the scruples, the prejudices, of his brethren. So that what in other cases was infirmity, imbecility, and superstition, gathered round it in his case the pure, high spirit of Christian charity and Christian delicacy. And now, out of the writings, and sayings, and deeds of those who loudly proclaim "the rights of man," and the "rights of liberty," match us, if you can, with one sentence so sublime, so noble, — one that will so stand at the bar of God hereafter, — as this single, glorious sentence of his, in which he asserts the rights of Christian conscience above the claims of Christian liberty: "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth lest I make my brother to offend."

XVII.

[Preached May 16, 1852.]

VICTORY OVER DEATH.

1 Cor. xv. 56, 57. — "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

On Sunday last I endeavored to bring before you the subject of that which Scripture calls the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The two points on which we were trying to get clear notions were these: What is meant by being under the law, and what is meant by being free from the law? When the Bible says that a man led by the Spirit is not under the law, it does not mean that he is free because he may sin without being punished for it, but it means that he is free because, being taught by God's Spirit to love what His law commands, he is no longer conscious of acting from restraint. The law does not drive him, because the Spirit leads him.

There is a state, brothren, when we recognize good, but do not love God in Christ. It is that state when we admire what is excellent, but are not able to perform it. It is a state when the love of good comes to nothing, dying away in a mere desire. That is the state of nature, when we are under the law, and not

converted to the love of Christ. And then there is another state, when God writes His law upon our hearts by love instead of fear. The one state is this—"I cannot do the things that I would;" the other state is this—"I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy commandments."

Just so far, therefore, as a Christian is led by the Spirit, he is a conqueror. A Christian in full possession of his privileges is a man whose very step ought to have in it all the elasticity of triumph, and whose very look ought to have in it all the brightness of victory. And just so far as a Christian suffers sin to struggle in him and overcome his resolutions, just so far he is under the law. And that is the key to the whole doctrine of the New Testament. From first to last, the great truth put forward is, The law can neither save you nor sanctify you. The Gospel can do both; for it is rightly and emphatically called the perfect law of liberty.

We proceed to-day to a further illustration of this subject--of Christian victory. In the verses which I have read out, the apostle has evidently the same subject in his mind—slavery through the law, victory through the Gospel. The strength of sin, he says, is the law. God giveth us the victory through Christ. And when we are familiar with St. Paul's trains of thinking, we find this idea coming in perpetually. It runs like a colored thread through embroidery, appearing on the upper surface every now and then in a different shape;--a leaf, it may be, or a flower,—but the same thread still, if you only trace it back with your finger. And this was the golden recurring thread in the mind of Paul. Restraint and law cannot check

sin; they only gall it, and make it struggle and rebel. The love of God in Christ — that, and only that, can give man the victory.

But, in this passage, the idea of victory is brought to bear upon the most terrible of all a Christian's enemies. It is faith here conquering in death. And the Apostle brings together all the believer's antagonists — the law's power, sin, and death, the chief antagonist of all; and then, as it were, on a conqueror's battlefield, shouts over them the hymn of triumph — "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We shall take up these two points to dwell upon.

I. The awfulness which hangs round the dying hour.

II. Faith conquering in death.

I. That which makes it peculiarly terrible to die is asserted in this passage to be guilt. We lay a stress upon this expression, the sting. It is not said that sin is the only bitterness; but it is the sting which contains in it the venom of a most exquisite torture. And, in truth, brethren, it is no mark of courage to speak lightly of human dying. We may do it in bravado, or in wantonness; but no man who thinks can call it a trifling thing to die. True thoughtfulness must shrink from death without Christ. There is a world of untold sensations crowded into that moment when a man puts his hand to his forehead and feels the damp upon it which tells him his hour is come. He has been waiting for death all his life, and now it is come. It is all over — his chance is past, and his eternity is settled. None of us know, except by

guess, what that sensation is. Myriads of human beings have felt it to whom life was dear; but they never spoke out their feelings, for such things are untold. And to every individual man, throughout all eternity, that sensation in its fulness can come but once. It is mockery, brethren, for a man to speak lightly of that which he cannot know till it comes.

Now, the first cause which makes it a solemn thing to die is the instinctive cleaving of everything that lives to its own existence. That unutterable thing which we call our being — the idea of parting with it is agony. It is the first and the intensest desire of living things, to be. Enjoyment, blessedness, everything we long for, is wrapped up in being. Darkness, and all that the spirit recoils from, is contained in this idea, not to be. It is in virtue of this unquenchable impulse that the world, in spite of all the misery that is in it, continues to struggle on. What are war, and trade, and labor, and professions? Are they all the result of struggling to be great? No, my brethren, they are the result of struggling *to be*. The first thing that men and nations labor for is existence. Reduce the nation or the man to their last resources, and only see what marvellous energy of contrivance the love of being arms them with. Read back the pauper's history at the end of seventy years, — his strange, sad history, in which scarcely a single day could insure subsistence for the morrow, — and yet learn what he has done these long years, in the stern struggle with impossibility, to hold his being where everything is against him, and to keep an existence, whose only conceivable charm is this, that it *is* existence. Now, it is with this intense passion for being that the idea of death clashes. Let

us search why it is we shrink from death. This reason, brethren, we shall find, that it presents to us the idea of *not being*. Talk as we will of immortality, there is an obstinate feeling that we cannot master, that we end in death; and *that* may be felt together with the firmest belief of a resurrection. Brethren, our faith tells us one thing, and our sensations tell us another. When we die we are surrendering, in truth, all that with which we have associated existence. All that we know of life is connected with a shape, a form, a body of materialism; and, now that that is palpably melting away into nothingness, the boldest heart may be excused a shudder, when there is forced upon it, in spite of itself, the idea of ceasing forever.

The second reason is not one of imagination at all, but most sober reality. It is a solemn thing to die, because it is the parting with all round which the heart's best affections have twined themselves. There are some men who have not the capacity for keen enjoyment; their affections have nothing in them of intensity, and so they pass through life without ever so uniting themselves with what they meet that there would be anything of pain in the severance. Of course, with them the bitterness of death does not attach so much to the idea of parting. But, my brethren, how is it with human nature generally? Our feelings do not weaken as we go on in life; emotions are less shown, and we get a command over our features and our expressions; but the man's feelings are deeper than the boy's. It is length of time that makes attachment. We become wedded to the sights and sounds of this lovely world more closely as years go on. Young men, with nothing rooted deep,

are prodigal of life. It is an adventure to them, rather than a misfortune, to leave their country forever. With the old man it is like tearing his own heart from him. And so it was that when Lot quitted Sodom, the younger members of his family went on gladly. It is a touching truth; it was the aged one who looked behind to the home which had so many recollections connected with it. And therefore it is that when men approach that period of existence when they must go, there is an instinctive lingering over things which they shall never see again. Every time the sun sets, every time the old man sees his children gathering round him, there is a filling of the eye with an emotion that we can understand. There is upon his soul the thought of parting — that strange wrench from all we love, which makes death (say what moralists will of it) a bitter thing.

Another pang which belongs to death we find in the sensation of loneliness which attaches to it. Have we ever seen a ship preparing to sail, with its load of pauper emigrants, to a distant colony? If we have, we know what that desolation is which comes from feeling unfriended on a new and untried excursion. All beyond the seas, to the ignorant poor man, is a strange land. They are going away from the helps and the friendships and the companionships of life, scarcely knowing what is before them. And it is in such a moment, when a man stands upon a deck, taking his last look of his fatherland, that there comes upon him a sensation new, strange, and inexpressibly miserable — the feeling of being alone in the world. Brethren, with all the bitterness of such a moment, it is but a feeble image when placed by the side of the

loneliness of death. We die alone. We go on our dark, mysterious journey, for the first time in all our existence, without one to accompany us. Friends are beside our bed — they must stay behind. Grant that a Christian has something like familiarity with the Most High — *that* breaks this solitary feeling; but what is it with the mass of men? It is a question full of loneliness to them. What is it they are to see? What are they to meet? Is it not true that, to the larger number of this congregation, there is no one point in all eternity on which the eye can fix distinctly and rest gladly — nothing beyond the grave, except a dark space into which they must plunge alone?

And yet, my brethren, with all these ideas, no doubt, vividly before his mind, it was none of them that the apostle selected as the crowning bitterness of dying. It was not the thought of surrendering existence. It was not the parting from all bright and lovely things. It was not the shudder of sinking into the sepulchre alone. "The sting of death is *sin*."

Now, there are two ways in which this deep truth applies itself. There is something that appalls in death when there are distinct separate acts of guilt resting on the memory; and there is something too in the possession of a guilty heart, which is quite another thing from acts of sin, that makes it an awful thing to die. There are some who carry about with them the dreadful secret of sin that has been done, guilt that has a name. A man has injured some one; he has made money or got on by unfair means; he has been unchaste; he has done some of those thousand things of life which leave upon the heart the dark spot that will not come out. All these are sins which you can

count up and number. And the recollection of things like these is that agony which we call remorse. Many of us have remembrances of this kind which are fatal to serenity. We shut them out, but it will not do. They bide their time, and then suddenly present themselves, together with the thought of a judgment-seat. When a guilty man begins to think of dying, it is like a vision of the Son of man presenting itself and calling out the voices of all the unclean spirits in the man—"Art thou come to torment us before the time?"

But, my brethren, it is a mistake if we suppose that is the common way in which sin stings at the thought of death. Men who have lived the career of passionate life have distinct and accumulated acts of guilt before their eyes. But with most men it is not guilty acts, but guiltiness of heart that weighs the heaviest. Only take yesterday as a specimen of life. What was it with most of us? A day of sin. Was it sin palpable and dark, such as we shall remember painfully this day year? Nay, my brethren, unkindness, petulance, wasted time, opportunities lost, frivolous conversation, *that* was our chief guilt. And yet, with all that, trifling as it may be, when it comes to be the history of life, does it not leave behind a restless undefinable sense of fault, a vague idea of debt, but to what extent we know not—perhaps the more wretched just because it is uncertain? My Christian brethren, this is the sting of sinfulness, the wretched consciousness of an unclean heart. It is just this feeling: "God is not my friend; I am going on to the grave, and no *man* can say aught against me, but my heart is not right; I want a river like that which the ancients fabled—the river of forgetfulness—that I might go

down into it and bathe, and come up a new man. It is not so much what I have done; it is what I am. Who shall save me from myself?" O, it is a desolate thing to think of the coffin, when that thought is in all its misery before the soul. It is the sting of death.

And now let us bear one thing in mind — the sting of sin is not a constant pressure. It may be that we live many years in the world before a death in our own family forces the thought personally home. Many years, before all those sensations which are so often the precursors of the tomb — the quick short cough, lassitude, emaciation, pain — come in startling suddenness upon us in our young vigor, and make us feel what it is to be here with death inevitable to ourselves. And when those things become habitual, habit makes delicacy the same forgetful thing as health; so that neither in sickness nor in health is the thought of death a constant pressure. It is only now and then; but so often as death is a reality, the sting of death is sin.

Once more we remark, that all this power of sin to agonize is traced by the apostle to the law — "the strength of sin is the law;" by which he means to say that sin would not be so violent if it were not for the attempt of God's law to restrain it. It is the law which makes sin strong. And he does not mean particularly the law of Moses. He means any law, and all law. Law is what forbids and threatens: law bears gallingly on those who want to break it. And St. Paul declares this, that no law, not even God's law, can make men righteous in heart, unless the Spirit has taught men's hearts to acquiesce in the law. It can only force out into rebellion the sin that is in them.

It is so, brethren, with a nation's law. The voice of the nation must go along with it. It must be the expression of their own feeling, and then they will have it obeyed. But, if it is only the law of a government, a law which is against the whole spirit of the people, there is first the murmur of a nation's disapprobation, and then there is transgression, and then, if the law be vindicated with a high hand, the next step is the bursting that law asunder in national revolution. And so it is with God's law. It will never control a man long who does not from his heart love it. First comes a sensation of restraint, and then comes a murmuring of the heart; and last, there comes the rising of passion in its giant might, made desperate by restraint. That is the law giving strength to sin.

And therefore, brethren, if all we know of God be this, that He has made laws, and that it is terrible to break them; if all our idea of religion be this, that it is a thing of commands and hindrances, — Thou shalt, and thou shalt not, — we are under the law, and there is no help for it. We *must* shrink from the encounter with death.

II. We pass to our second subject — Faith conquering in death.

And, before we enter upon this topic, there are two general remarks that we have to make. The first is, the elevating power of faith. There is nothing in all this world that ever led man on to real victory but faith. Faith is that looking forward to a future with something like certainty, that raises man above the narrow feelings of the present. Even in this life he is a greater man, a man of more elevated character,

who is steadily pursuing a plan that requires some years to accomplish, than he who is living by the day. Look forward but ten years, and plan for it, live for it; there is something of manhood, something of courage, required to conquer the thousand things that stand in your way. And therefore it is that faith, and nothing but faith, gives victory in death. It is that elevation of character which we get from looking steadily and forever forward, till eternity becomes a real home to us, that enables us to look down upon the last struggle, and the funeral, and the grave, not as the great end of all, but only as something that stands between us and the end. We are conquerors of death when we are able to look beyond it.

Our second remark is for the purpose of fixing special attention upon this, that ours is not merely to be victory, it is to be victory through Christ. "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Victory, brethren, mere victory over death, is no unearthly thing. You may get it by infidelity. Only let a man sin long enough, and desperately enough, to shut judgment altogether out of his creed, and then you have a man who can bid defiance to the grave. It was so that our country's greatest infidel historian met death. He quitted the world without parade and without display. If we want a specimen of victory apart from Christ, we have it on his death-bed. He left all this strange world of restlessness, calmly, like an unreal show that must go to pieces, and he himself an unreality departing from it. A sceptic can be a conqueror in death.

Or, again, mere manhood may give us a victory. He who has only learned not to be afraid to die has not

learned much. We have steel and nerve enough in our hearts to dare anything. And, after all, it is a triumph so common as scarcely to deserve the name. Felons die on the scaffold like men; soldiers can be hired by tens of thousands, for a few pence a day, to front death in its worst form. Every minute that we live, sixty of the human race are passing away, and the greater part with courage — the weak, and the timid, as well as the resolute. Courage is a very different thing from the Christian's victory.

Once more, brethren; necessity can make man conqueror over death. We can make up our minds to anything when it once becomes inevitable. It is the agony of suspense that makes danger dreadful. History can tell us that men can look with desperate calmness upon hell itself when once it has become a certainty. And it is this, after all, that commonly makes the dying hour so quiet a thing. It is more dreadful in the distance than in the reality. When a man feels that there is no help, and he must go, he lays him down to die, as quietly as a tired traveller wraps himself in his cloak to sleep. It is quite another thing from all this that Paul meant by victory.

In the first place, it is the prerogative of a Christian to be conqueror over Doubt. Brethren, do we all know what doubt means? Perchance not. There are some men who have never believed enough to doubt. There are some who have never thrown their hopes with such earnestness on the world to come, as to feel anxiety for fear it should not all be true. But every one who knows what Faith is knows, too, what is the desolation of Doubt. We pray till we begin to ask, Is there one who hears, or am I whispering to

myself? — We hear the consolation administered to the bereaved, and we see the coffin lowered into the grave, and the thought comes, What if all this doctrine of a life to come be but the dream of man's imaginative mind, carried on from age to age, and so believed because it is a venerable superstition? Now, Christ gives us victory over that terrible suspicion in two ways. First, He does it by His own resurrection. We have got a fact there that all the metaphysics about impossibility cannot rob us of. In moments of perplexity we look back to this. The grave has once, and more than once, at the Redeemer's bidding, given up its dead. It is a world-fact. It tells what the Bible means by our resurrection: not a spiritual rising into new holiness merely; that, but also something more. It means that, in our own proper identity, we shall live again. Make that thought real, and God has given you, so far, victory over the grave through Christ.

There is another way in which we get the victory over doubt, and that is by living in Christ. All doubt comes from living out of habits of affectionate obedience to God. By idleness, by neglected prayer, we lose our power of realizing things not seen. Let a man be religious and irreligious at intervals, — irregular, inconsistent, without some distinct thing to live for, — it is a matter of impossibility that he can be free from doubts. He must make up his mind for a dark life. Doubts can only be dispelled by that kind of active life that realizes Christ. And there is no faith that gives a victory so steadily triumphant as that. When such a man comes near the opening of the vault, it is no world of sorrows he is entering upon. He is only going to see things that he has felt, for he has been

living in heaven. He has his grasp on things that other men are only groping after, and touching now and then. Live above this world, brethren, and then the powers of the world to come are so upon you that there is no room for doubt.

Besides all this, it is a Christian's privilege to have victory over the fear of death. And here it is exceedingly easy to paint what, after all, is only the image-picture of a dying hour. It is the easiest thing to represent the dying Christian as a man who always sinks into the grave full of hope, full of triumph, in the certain hope of a blessed resurrection. Brethren, we must paint things in the sober colors of truth; not as they might be supposed to be, but as they are. Often that is only a picture. Either very few death-beds are Christian ones, or else triumph is a very different thing from what the word generally implies. Solemn, subdued, full of awe and full of solemnity, is the dying hour generally of the holiest men: sometimes almost darkness. Rapture is a rare thing, except in books and scenes.

Let us understand what really is the victory over fear. It may be rapture, or it may not. All that depends very much on temperament; and, after all, the broken words of a dying man are a very poor index of his real state before God. Rapturous hope has been granted to martyrs in peculiar moments. It is on record of a minister of our own Church, that his expectation of seeing God in Christ became so intense, as his last hour drew near, that his physician was compelled to bid him calm his transports, because in so excited a state he could not die. A strange unnatural energy was imparted to his muscular frame by his

nerves overstrung with triumph. But, brethren, it fosters a dangerous feeling to take cases like those as precedents. It leads to that most terrible of all unrealities, the acting of a death-bed scene. A Christian conqueror dies calmly. Brave men in battle do not boast that they are not afraid. Courage is so natural to them, that they are not conscious they are doing anything out of the common way. Christian bravery is a deep, calm thing, unconscious of itself. There are more triumphant death-beds than we count, if we only remember this — true fearlessness makes no parade. O, it is not only in those passionate effusions in which the ancient martyrs spoke sometimes of panting for the crushing of their limbs by the lions in the amphitheatre, or of holding out their arms to embrace the flames that were to curl round them — it is not then only that Christ has stood by His servants, and made them more than conquerors: — there may be something of earthly excitement in all that. Every day His servants are dying meekly and peacefully, not a word of victory on their lips, but Christ's deep triumph in their hearts — watching the slow progress of their own decay, and yet so far emancipated from personal anxiety that they are still able to think and to plan for others, not knowing that they are doing any great thing. They die, and the world hears nothing of them: and yet theirs was the completest victory. They came to the battle-field, the field to which they had been looking forward all their lives, and the enemy was not to be found. There was no foe to fight with.

The last form in which a Christian gets the victory over death is by means of his resurrection. It seems

to have been this which was chiefly alluded to by the apostle here; for he says, verse 54, "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption . . . *then* shall come to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." And, to say the truth, brethren, it is a rhetorical expression rather than a sober truth when we call anything, except the resurrection, victory over death. We may conquer doubt and fear when we are dying, but that is not conquering death. It is like a warrior, crushed to death by a superior antagonist, refusing to yield a groan, and bearing the glance of defiance to the last. You feel that he is an unconquerable spirit, but he is not the conqueror. And when you see flesh melting away, and mental power becoming infantine in its feebleness, and lips scarcely able to articulate, is there left one moment a doubt upon the mind as to *who* is the conqueror, in spite of all the unshaken fortitude there may be? The victory is on the side of Death, not on the side of the dying.

And, my brethren, if we would enter into the full feeling of triumph contained in this verse, we must just try to bear in mind what this world would be without the thought of a resurrection. If we could conceive an unselfish man looking upon this world of desolation with that infinite compassion which all the brave and good feel, what conception could he have but that of defeat, and failure, and sadness — the sons of man mounting into a bright existence, and one after another falling back into darkness and nothingness, like soldiers trying to mount an impracticable breach, and falling back crushed and mangled into the ditch before the bayonets and the rattling fire of their con-

querors! Misery and guilt, look which way you will, till the heart gets sick with looking at it. Brethren, until a man looks on evil till it seems to him almost like a real personal enemy rejoicing over the destruction that it has made, he can scarcely conceive the deep rapture which rushed into the mind of the Apostle Paul when he remembered that a day was coming when all this was to be reversed. A day was coming, and it was the day of reality for which he lived, ever present and ever certain, when this sad world was to put off *forever* its changefulness and its misery, and the grave was to be robbed of its victory, and the bodies were to come forth purified by their long sleep. He called all this a victory, because he felt that it was a real battle that has to be fought and won before that can be secured. One battle has been fought by Christ; and another battle, most real and difficult, but yet a conquering one, is to be fought by us. He hath imparted to us the virtue of His wrestlings, and the strength of His victory. So that, when the body shall rise again, the power of the law to condemn is gone, because we have learned to love the law.

And now, to conclude all this, there are but two things which remain to say. In the first place, brethren, if we would be conquerors, we must realize God's love in Christ. Take care not to be under the law. Constraint never yet made a conqueror; the utmost it can do is to make either a rebel or a slave. Believe that God loves you. He gave a triumphant demonstration of it in the Cross. Never shall we conquer self till we have learned *to love*. My Christian brethren, let us remember our high privilege. Christian life, so far as it deserves the name, is victory. We are not going

forth to mere battle — we are going forth to conquer. To gain mastery over self, and sin, and doubt, and fear, till the last coldness, coming across the brow, tell us that all is over, and our warfare accomplished, — that we are safe, the everlasting arms beneath us, — *that* is our calling. Brethren beloved, do not be content with a slothful, dreamy, uncertain struggle. You are to conquer, and the banner under which we are to win is not Fear, but Love. "The strength of sin is the law;" the victory is by keeping before us God in Christ.

Lastly, there is need of encouragement for those of us whose faith is not of the conquering, but the timid kind. There are some whose hearts will reply to all this, Surely victory is not always a Christian's portion. Is there no cold, dark watching in Christian life; no struggle when victory seems a mockery to speak of — no times when life and light seem feeble, and Christ is to us but a name, and death a reality? "Perfect love casteth out fear;" but who has it? Victory is by faith; but, O God, who will tell us what this faith *is* that men speak of as a thing so easy, and how are we to get it? You tell us to pray for faith; but how shall we pray in earnest, unless we first have the very faith we pray for?

My Christian brethren, it is just to this deepest cry of the human heart that it is impossible to return a full answer. All that is true. To feel faith is the grand difficulty of life. Faith is a deep impression of God and God's love, and personal trust in it. It is easy to say, "Believe, and thou shalt be saved," but well we know it is easier said than done. We cannot say how men are to *get* faith. It is God's gift, almost in the same way that genius is. You cannot work *for* faith;

you must have it first, and then work *from* it. But, brethren beloved, we can say, Look up; though we know not how the mechanism of the will which directs the eye is to be put in motion; we can say, Look to God in Christ, though we know not how men are to obtain faith to do it. Let us be in earnest. Our polar star is the love of the Cross. Take the eye off that, and you are in darkness and bewilderment at once. Let us not mind what is past. Perhaps it is all failure, and useless struggle, and broken resolves. What then? Settle this first, brethren, Are you in earnest? If so, though your faith be weak and your struggles unsatisfactory, you may begin the hymn of triumph *now*, for victory is pledged. "Thanks be to God, which" not *shall* give, but "*giveth* us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

XVIII.

[Preached June 20, 1852.]

MAN'S GREATNESS AND GOD'S GREATNESS.

ISAIAH lvii. 15. — "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

THE origin of this announcement seems to have been the state of contempt in which religion found itself in the days of Isaiah. One of the most profligate monarchs that ever disgraced the page of sacred history sat upon the throne of Judah. His court was filled with men who recommended themselves chiefly by their licentiousness. The altar was forsaken. Sacrilegious hands had placed the abominations of heathenism in the Holy Place; and Piety, banished from the State, the Church, and the Royal court, was once more as she had been before, and will be again, a wanderer on the face of the earth. Now, however easy it may be to contemplate such a state of things at a distance, it never takes place in a man's own day and time without suggesting painful perplexities of a two-fold nature. In the first place, suspicions respecting God's character; and, in the second place, misgivings as to his own duty. For a faithless heart whispers, Is it worth while to suffer

for a sinking cause? Honor, preferment, grandeur, follow in the train of unscrupulous conduct. To be strict in goodness, is to be pointed at and shunned. To be no better than one's neighbors is the only way of being at peace. It seems to have been to such a state as this that Isaiah was commissioned to bring light. He vindicated God's character by saying that He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity." He encouraged those who were trodden down to perseverance, by reminding them that real dignity is something very different from present success. God dwells with him "that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

I. That in which the greatness of God consists.

II. That in which man's greatness consists.

I. The first measurement, so to speak, which is given us of God's greatness, is in respect of Time. He inhabiteth Eternity. There are some subjects on which it would be good to dwell, if it were only for the sake of that enlargement of mind which is produced by their contemplation. And eternity is one of these, so that you cannot steadily fix the thought upon it without being sensible of a peculiar kind of elevation, at the same time that you are humbled by a personal feeling of utter insignificance. You have come in contact with something so immeasurable – beyond the narrow range of our common speculations – that you are exalted by the very conception of it. Now, the only way we have of forming any idea of eternity is by going, step by step, up to the largest measures of time we know of, and so ascending, on and on, till we are lost in wonder. We cannot grasp eternity; but

we can learn something of it by perceiving, that, rise to what portion of time we will, eternity is vaster than the vastest. We take up, for instance, the history of our own country, and then, when we have spent months in mastering the mere outline of those great events which, in the slow course of revolving centuries, have made England what she is, her earlier ages seem so far removed from our own times that they appear to belong to a hoary and most remote antiquity. But, then, when you compare those times with even the existing works of man, and when you remember that, when England was yet young in civilization, the pyramids of Egypt were already gray with fifteen hundred years, you have got another step, which impresses you with a doubled amount of vastness. Double that period, and you come to the far-distant moment when the present aspect of this world was called, by creation, out of the formless void in which it was before.

Modern science has raised us to a pinnacle of thought beyond even this. It has commanded us to think of countless ages in which that formless void existed before it put on the aspect of its present creation. Millions of years before God called the light day, and the darkness night, there was, if science speaks true, creation after creation called into existence, and buried in its own ruins upon the surface of this earth. And, then, there was a time beyond even this — there was a moment when this earth itself, with all its countless creations and innumerable ages, did not exist. And, again, in that far back distance it is more than conceivable — it seems, by the analogy of God's dealings, next to certain — that ten thousand worlds may have been called into existence, and lasted their unnum-

ored ages, and then perished in succession. Compared with these stupendous figures, six thousand years of *our* planet sink into nothingness. The mind is lost in dwelling on such thoughts as these. When you have penetrated far, far back, by successive approximations, and still see the illimitable distance receding before you as distant as before, imagination absolutely gives way, and you feel dizzy and bewildered with new, strange thoughts, that have not a name. But this is only one aspect of the case. It looks only to time past. The same overpowering calculations wait us when we bend our eyes on that which is to come. Time stretches back immeasurably, but it also stretches on and on forever. Now, it is by such a conception as this that the inspired prophet attempts to measure the immensurable of God. All that eternity, magnificent as it is, never was without an Inhabitant. Eternity means nothing by itself. It merely expresses the existence of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth it. We make a fanciful distinction between eternity and time — there is no real distinction. We are in eternity at this moment. That has begun to be with us which never began with God. Our only measure of time is by the succession of ideas. If ideas flow fast, and many sights and many thoughts pass by us, time seems lengthened. If we have the simple routine of a few engagements, the same every day, with little variety, the years roll by us so fast that we cannot mark them. It is not so with God. There is no succession of ideas with Him. Every possible idea is present with Him now. It was present with Him ten thousand years ago. God's dwelling-place is

that eternity which has neither past nor future, but one vast, immeasurable present.

There is a second measure given us of God in this verse. It is in respect of Space. He dwelleth in the high and lofty place. He dwelleth, moreover, in the most insignificant place — even the heart of man. And the idea by which the prophet would here exhibit to us the greatness of God is that of His eternal Omnipresence. It is difficult to say which conception carries with it the greatest exaltation — that of boundless space, or that of unbounded time. When we pass from the tame and narrow scenery of our own country, and stand on those spots of earth in which nature puts on her wilder and more awful forms, we are conscious of something of the grandeur which belongs to the thought of space. Go where the strong foundations of the earth lie around you in their massive majesty, and mountain after mountain rears its snow to heaven in a giant chain, and then, when this bursts upon you for the first time in life, there is that peculiar feeling which we call, in common language, an enlargement of ideas. But when we are told that the sublimity of those dizzy heights is but a nameless speck in comparison with the globe of which they form the girdle; and when we pass on to think of that globe itself as a minute spot in the mighty system to which it belongs, so that our world might be annihilated, and its loss would not be felt; and when we are told that eighty millions of such systems roll in the world of space, to which our own system again is as notning, and when we are again pressed with the recollection that beyond those furthest limits creative power is exerted immeasurably further than eye can reach, or

thought can penetrate,— then, brethren, the awe which comes upon the heart is only, after all, a tribute to a *portion* of God's greatness. Yet we need not science to teach us this. It is the thought which oppresses very childhood — the overpowering thought of space. A child can put his head upon his hands, and think and think till it reaches in imagination some far-distant barrier of the universe, and still the difficulty presents itself to his young mind, "And what is beyond that barrier?" and the only answer is, "The high and lofty place." And this, brethren, is the inward seal with which God has stamped Himself upon man's heart. If every other trace of Deity has been expunged by the fall, these two at least defy destruction — the thought of Eternal Time, and the thought of Immeasurable Space.

The third measure which is given us of God respects His character. His name is Holy. The chief idea which this would convey to us is separation from evil. Brethren, there is perhaps a time drawing near when those of us who shall stand at His right hand, purified from all evil taint, shall be able to comprehend absolutely what is meant by the Holiness of God. At present, with hearts cleaving down to earth, and tossed by a thousand gusts of unholy passion, we can only form a dim conception *relatively* of that which it implies. None but the pure can understand purity. The chief knowledge which we have of God's holiness comes from our acquaintance with unholiness. We know what impurity is — God is *not* that. We know what injustice is — God is *not* that. We know what restlessness, and guilt, and passion are, and deceitfulness, and pride, and waywardness — all these we know

God is none of these. And this is our chief acquaintance with His character. We know what God is *not*. We scarcely can be rightly said to know — that is, to feel — what God *is*. And therefore this is implied in the very name of holiness. Holiness in the Jewish sense means simply separateness. From all that is wrong, and mean, and base, our God is forever separate.

There is another way in which God gives to us a conception of what this holiness implies. Tell us of His justice, His truth, His loving-kindness — all these are cold abstractions. They convey no distinct idea of themselves to our hearts. What we wanted was, that these should be exhibited to us in tangible reality. And it is just this which God has done. He has exhibited all these attributes, not in the light of *speculation*, but in the light of *facts*. He has given us His own character, in all its delicacy of coloring, in the history of Christ. Love, Mercy, Tenderness, Purity, — these are no mere names when we see them brought out in the human actions of our Master. Holiness is only a shadow to our minds, till it receives shape and substance in the life of Christ. All this character of holiness is intelligible to us in Christ. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten of the Father, He hath declared Him."

There is a third light in which God's holiness is shown to us, and that is in the sternness with which He recoils from guilt. When Christ died for man, I know what God's love means; and when Jesus wept human tears over Jerusalem, I know what God's compassion means; and when the stern denunciations of Jesus rung in the Pharisees' ears, I can comprehend

what God's indignation is; and when Jesus stood calm before His murderers, I have a conception of what serenity is. Brethren, revelation opens to us a scene beyond the grave, when this shall be exhibited in full operation. There will be an everlasting banishment from God's presence of that impurity on which the last efforts have been tried in vain. It will be a carrying out of this sentence by a law that cannot be reversed — "Depart from me, ye cursed." But it is quite a mistake to suppose that this is only a matter of revelation. Traces of it we have now on this side the sepulchre. Human life is full of God's recoil from sin. In the writhings of a heart which has been made to possess its own impurities; in the dark spot which guilt leaves upon the conscience, rising up, at times, in a man's gayest moments, as if it will not come out; in the restlessness and the feverishness which follow the efforts of the man who has indulged habits of sin too long, — in all these there is a law repelling wickedness from the presence of the Most High, which proclaims that God is holy.

And now, brethren, it is in these that the greatness of God consists — Eternal in time, Unlimited in space, Unchangeable, Pure in character, His serenity and His vastness arise from His own perfections.

II. We are to consider, in the second place, the greatness of man.

1. The nature of that greatness.

2. The persons who are great.

Now, this is brought before us in the text in this one fact, that man has been made a habitation of the Deity — "I dwell with him that is of a contrite and

humble spirit." There is in the very outset this distinction between what is great in God and what is great in man. To be independent of everything in the universe is God's glory, and to be independent is man's shame. All that God has, He has from Himself; — all that man has, he has from God. And the moment man cuts himself off from God, that moment he cuts himself off from grandeur.

There are two things implied in Scripture, when it is said that God dwells with man. The first is that peculiar presence which He has conferred upon the members of His Church. Brethren, we presume not to define what that presence is, and how it dwells within us — we are content to leave it as a mystery. But this we know, that something of a very peculiar and supernatural character takes place in the heart of every man upon whom the Gospel has been brought to bear with power. "Know ye not," says the apostle, "that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?" And again, in the Epistle to the Ephesians — "In Christ ye are builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit." There is something in these expressions which refuses to be explained away. They leave us but one conclusion, and that is, that, in all those who have become Christ's by faith, God personally and locally has taken up His dwelling-place.

There is a second meaning attached in Scripture to the expression, God dwells in man. According to the first meaning, we understand it in the most plain and literal sense the words are capable of conveying. According to the second, we understand His dwelling in a figurative sense, implying this — that He gives an acquaintance with Himself to man. So, for instance,

when Judas asked, "Lord, how is it, that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us, and not to the world?" our Redeemer's reply was this: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him." In the question it was asked *how* God would manifest Himself to His servants. In the answer it was shown *how* He would make His abode with them. And if the answer be any reply to the question at all, what follows is this – that God making His abode or dwelling in the heart is the same thing exactly as God's manifesting Himself to the heart. Brethren, in these two things the greatness of man consists. One is to have God so dwelling in us as to impart His character to us; and the other is to have God so dwelling in us that we recognize His presence, and know that we are His and He is ours. They are two things perfectly distinct. To *have* God in us – this is salvation; to *know* that God is in us – this is assurance.

Lastly, we inquire as to the persons who are truly great. And these the Holy Scripture has divided into two classes – those who are humble, and those who are contrite in heart. Or, rather, it will be observed, that it is the same class of character under different circumstances. Humbleness is the frame of mind of those who are in a state of innocence; contrition, of those who are in a state of repentant guilt. Brethren, let not the expression innocence be misunderstood. Innocence, in its true and highest sense, never existed but once upon this earth. Innocence cannot be the religion of man now. But yet there are those who have walked with God from youth, not quenching the Spirit which He gave them, and who are, therefore,

comparatively innocent beings. All they have to do is to go on, whereas the guilty man has to stop and turn back before he can go on. Repentance with them is the gentle work of every day, not the work of one distinct and miserable part of life. They are those whom the Lord calls just men which need no repentance, and of whom He says, "He that is clean needeth not, save to wash his feet."

Now, they are described here as the humble in heart. Two things are required for this state of mind. One is, that a man should have a true estimate of God; and the other is, that he should have a true estimate of himself.

Vain, blind man places himself on a little corner of this planet, a speck upon a speck of the universe, and begins to form conclusions from the small fraction of God's government which he can see from thence. The astronomer looks at the laws of motion, and forgets that there must have been a First Cause to commence that motion. The surgeon looks at the materialism of his own frame, and forgets that matter cannot organize itself into exquisite beauty. The metaphysician buries himself in the laws of mind, and forgets that there may be spiritual influences producing all those laws. And this, brethren, is the unhumbled spirit of philosophy — intellectual pride. Men look at Nature, but they do not look through it up to Nature's God. There is awful ignorance of God, producing an unhumbled heart, which arises from indulged sin. God may be shut out from the soul by pride of intellect, or by pride of heart.

Pharaoh is placed before us in Scripture almost as a type of pride. His pride arose from ignorance of

God. "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." And this was not intellectual pride; it was pride in a matter of duty. Pharaoh had been immersing his whole heart in the narrow politics of Egypt. The great problem of his day was to aggrandize his own people, and prevent an insurrection of the Israelites; and that small kingdom of Egypt had been his universe. He shut his heart to the voice of justice and the voice of humanity; in other words, great in the pride of human majesty, small in the sight of the high and lofty One, he shut himself out from the knowledge of God.

The next ingredient of humbleness is, that a man must have a right estimate of himself. There is a vast amount of self-deception on this point. We say of ourselves that which we could not bear others to say of us. A man truly humbled would take it only as his due when others treated him in the way that he says that he deserves. But, my brethren, we kneel in our closets in shame for what we are, and we tell our God that the lowest place is too good for us; and then we go into the world, and if we meet with slight or disrespect, or if our opinion be not attended to, or if another be preferred before us, there is all the anguish of a galled and jealous spirit, and half the bitterness of our lives comes from this, that we are smarting from what we call the wrongs and the neglect of men. My beloved brethren, if we saw ourselves as God sees us, we should be willing to be anywhere, — to be silent when others speak, to be passed by in the world's crowd, and thrust aside to make way for others. We should be willing to put others in the

way of doing that which we might have got reputation for by doing ourselves. This was the temper of our Master — this is the meek and the quiet spirit, and this is the temper of the humble with whom the high and lofty One dwells.

The other class of those who are truly great are the contrite in spirit. At first sight it might be supposed that there must ever be a vast distinction between the innocent and the penitent. It was so that the elder son, in the parable, thought when he saw his brother restored to his father's favor. He was surprised and hurt. He had served his father these many years; his brother had wasted his substance in riotous living. But in this passage God makes no distinction. He places the humble consistent follower and the broken-hearted sinner on a level. He dwells with both, — with him that is contrite, *and* with him that is humble. He sheds around them both the grandeur of His own presence, and the annals of Church history are full of exemplifications of this marvel of God's grace. By the transforming grace of Christ, men who have done the very work of Satan have become as conspicuous in the service of Heaven as they were once conspicuous in the career of guilt. So indisputably has this been so, that men have drawn from such instances the perverted conclusion, that if a man is ever to be a great saint, he must first be a great sinner. God forbid, brethren, that we should ever make such an inference. But this we infer for our own encouragement, that past sin does not necessarily preclude from high attainments. We must "forget the things that are behind." We must not mourn over past years of folly, as if they made saint-

ness impossible. Deep as we may have been once in earthliness, so deep we may also be in penitence, and so high we may become in spirituality. We have so many years the fewer to do our work in. Well, brethren, let us try to do it so much the faster. Christ can crowd the work of years into hours. He did it with the dying thief. If the man who has set out early may take his time, it certainly cannot be so with *us* who have lost our time. If we have lost God's bright and happy presence by our wilfulness, what then? — Unrelieved sadness? Nay, brethren, calmness, purity, may have gone from our heart; but *all* is not gone yet. Just as sweetness comes from the bark of the cinnamon when it is bruised, so can the spirit of the Cross of Christ bring beauty and holiness and peace out of the bruised and broken heart. God dwells with the contrite as much as with the humble.

And now, brethren, to conclude: the first inference we collect from this subject is the danger of coming into collision with such a God as our God. Day by day we commit sins of thought and word of which the dull eye of man takes no cognizance. He whose name is Holy cannot pass them by. We may elude the vigilance of a human enemy, and place ourselves beyond his reach. God fills all space — there is not a spot in which His piercing eye is not on us, and His uplifted hand cannot find us out. Man must strike soon, if he would strike at all; for opportunities pass away from him, and his victim may escape his vengeance by death. There is no passing of opportunity with God, and it is this which makes His long-suffering a solemn thing. God can wait, for he has a whole eternity before Him

in which He may strike. "All things are open and naked to Him with whom we have to do."

In the next place, we are taught the heavenly character of condescension. It is not from the insignificance of man that God's dwelling with him is so strange. It is as much the glory of God to bend His attention on an atom as to uphold the universe. But the marvel is, that the habitation which He has chosen for Himself is an impure one. And when He came down from His magnificence to make this world His home, still the same character of condescension was shown through all the life of Christ. Our God selected the society of the outcasts of earth, those whom none else would speak to. Brethren, if we would be God-like, we must follow in the same steps. Our temptation is to do exactly the reverse. We are forever wishing to obtain the friendship and the intimacy of those above us in the world — to win over men of influence to truth — to associate with men of talent, and station, and title. This is the world-chase, and this, brethren, is too much the religious man's chase. But, if you look simply to the question of resemblance to God, then the man who makes it a habit to select that one in life to do good to, and that one in a room to speak with, whom others pass by because there is nothing either of intellect, or power, or name, to recommend him, but only humbleness, *that* man has stamped upon his heart more of heavenly similitude by condescension, than the man who has made it his business to win this world's great ones, even for the sake of truth.

Lastly, we learn the guilt of two things, of which this world is full, — vanity and pride. There is a dis-

tinction between these two. But the distinction consists in this: that the vain man looks for the admiration of others — the proud man requires nothing but his own. Now, it is this distinction which makes vanity despicable to us all. We can easily find out the vain man; we soon discover what it is he wants to be observed, whether it be a gift of person, or a gift of mind, or a gift of character. If he be vain of his person, his attitudes will tell the tale. If he be vain of his judgment, or his memory, or his honesty, he cannot help an unnecessary parade. The world finds him out, and this is why vanity is ever looked on with contempt. So soon as we let men see that we are supplicants for their admiration, we are at their mercy. We have given them the privilege of feeling that they are above us. We have invited them to spurn us. And therefore vanity is but a thing for scorn. But it is very different with pride. No man can look down on him that is proud, for he has asked no man for anything. They are forced to feel respect for pride, because it is thoroughly independent of them. It wraps itself up in the consequence of its own excellences, and scorns to care whether others take note of them or not. It is just here that the danger lies. We have exalted a sin into a virtue. No man will acknowledge that he is vain, but almost any man will acknowledge that he is proud. But, tried by the balance of the sanctuary, there is little to choose between the two. If a man look for greatness out of God, it matters little whether he seek it in his own applause, or in the applause of others. The *proud* Pharisee, who trusted in himself that he was righteous, was condemned by Christ as severely, and even more, than the *vain* Jews who

"could not believe because they sought honor from one another, and not that honor which cometh from God only." It may be a more dazzling and a more splendid sin to be proud. It is not less hateful in God's sight. Let us speak God's word to our own unquiet, swelling, burning hearts. Pride may disguise itself as it will in its own majesty, but in the presence of the high and lofty One it is but littleness, after all.

XIX.

[Preached June 27, 1852.]

THE LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL USE OF LAW.

(A FRAGMENT.)

1 Tim. i. 8. — "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully."

It is scarcely ever possible to understand a passage without some acquaintance with the history of the circumstances under which it was written.

At Ephesus, over which Timothy was bishop, people had been bewildered by the teaching of converted Jews, who mixed the old leaven of Judaism with the new spirituality of Christianity. They maintained the perpetual obligation of the Jewish law. — v. 7. They desired to be teachers of the law. They required strict performance of a number of severe observances. They talked mysteriously of angels and powers intermediate between God and the human soul. — v. 4. The result was an interminable discussion at Ephesus. The Church was filled with disputations and controversies.

Now, there is something always refreshing to see the Apostle Paul descending upon an arena of controversy, where minds have been bewildered, and so much is to be said on both sides that people are uncer-

tain which to take. You know at once that he will pour light upon the question, and illuminate all the dark corners. You know that he will not trim, and balance, and hang doubtful, or become a partisan; but, that he will seize some great principle which lies at the root of the whole controversy, and make its true bearing clear at once.

This he always does, and this he does on the present occasion. — v. 5 and 6. He does not, like a vehement polemic, say, Jewish ceremonies and rules are all worthless, nor some ceremonies are worthless and others essential; but he says, the root of the whole matter is charity. If you turn aside from this, all is lost; here at once the controversy closes. So far as any rule fosters the spirit of love, — that is, is used lawfully, — it is wise, and has a use. So far as it does not, it is chaff. So far as it hinders it, it is poison.

Now, observe how different this method is from that which is called the sober, moderate way — the *via media*. Some would have said, the great thing is to avoid extremes. If the question respects fasting, fast, only in *moderation*. If the observance of the Sabbath-day, observe it on the Jewish principle, only *not so strictly*.

Paul, on the contrary, went down to the root; he said, the true question is not whether the law is good or bad, but on what principle; he said, you are both wrong — *you*, in saying that the observance of the law is essential, for the end of it is charity, and if *that* be got what matter *how*, — *you*, in saying rules may be dispensed with entirely and always, "for we know that the law is good."

I. The unlawful use.

II. The lawful use of law.

I. The unlawful use.

Define law. — By law, Paul almost always means not the Mosaic law, but law in its essence and principle, that is, constraint. This chiefly in two forms expresses itself — 1st, a custom; 2d, a maxim. As examples of custom, we might give Circumcision, or the Sabbath, or Sacrifice, or Fasting.

Law said, Thou shalt *do* these things; and law, as mere law, constrained them. Or, again, law may express itself in maxims and rules.

In rules, as when law said, "Thou shalt not steal," — not saying a word about secret dishonesty of heart, but simply taking cognizance of *acts*.

In maxims, as when it is admonished that man ought to give a tenth to God, leaving the principle of the matter untouched. Principle is one thing, and maxim is another. A principle requires liberality; a maxim says one-tenth. A principle says, "A merciful man is merciful to his beast," leaves mercy to the heart, and does not define how; a maxim says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out thy corn." A principle says, "Forgive;" a maxim defines "seven times;" and thus the whole law falls into two divisions:

The ceremonial law, which constrains life by customs.

The moral law, which guides life by rules and maxims.

Now, it is an illegitimate use of law — 1. To expect by obedience to it to make out a title to salvation.

By the deeds of the law, shall no man living be justified. Salvation is by faith; a state of heart right with God; faith is the spring of holiness — a well of life

Salvation is not the having committed a certain number of good acts. Destruction is not the having committed a certain number of crimes. Salvation is God's Spirit in us, leading to good. Destruction is the selfish spirit in us, leading to wrong.

For a plain reason, then, obedience to law cannot save, because it is merely the performance of a certain number of acts, which may be done by habit, from fear, from compulsion. Obedience remains still imperfect. A man may have obeyed the rule, and kept the maxim, and yet not be perfect. "All these commandments have I kept from my youth up."—"Yet lackest thou one thing." The law he had kept. The spirit of obedience in its high form of sacrifice he had not.

2. To use it superstitiously.

It is plain that this was the use made of it by the Ephesian teachers. — v. 4. It seemed to them that *law* was pleasing to God as restraint. Then unnatural restraints came to be imposed — on the appetites, fasting; on the affections, celibacy. This is what Paul condemns. — ch. iv., v. 8. "Bodily exercise profiteth little."

And again, this superstition showed itself in a false reverence. Wondrous stories respecting angels, respecting the eternal genealogy of Christ; awful thoughts about spirits. The apostle calls all these, very unceremoniously, "endless genealogies," v. 4, and "old wives' fables."— ch. iv., v. 7.

The question at issue is, wherein true reverence consists: according to them, in the multiplicity of the objects of reverence; according to St. Paul, in the character of the object revered. . . . . God and Right the true object.

But you are not a whit the better for solemn and reverential feelings about a mysterious, invisible world. To tremble before a consecrated wafer is spurious reverence. To bend before the Majesty of Right is Christian reverence.

3. To use it as if the letter of it were sacred. The law commanded none to eat the show-bread except the priests. David ate it in hunger. If Abimelech had scrupled to give it, he would have used the law unlawfully.

The law commanded no manner of work. The apostles, in hunger, rubbed the ears of corn. The Pharisees used the law unlawfully in forbidding that.

II. The lawful use of law.

1. As a restraint to keep outward evil in check. . . . "The law was made for sinners and profane." . . . Illustrate this by reference to capital punishment. No sane man believes that punishment by death will make a nation's heart right, or that the sight of an execution can soften or ameliorate. Punishment does not work in that way. It is not meant for that purpose. It is meant to guard society.

The law commanding a blasphemer to be stoned could not teach one Israelite love to God, but it could save the streets of Israel from scandalous ribaldry.

And, therefore, clearly understand, law is a mere check. to bad men it does not improve them; it often makes them worse; it cannot sanctify them. God never intended that it should. It saves society from the open transgression; it does not contemplate the amelioration of the offender.

Hence we see for what reason the apostle insisted on the use of the law for Christians. Law never can be abrogated. Strict rules are needed exactly in proportion as we want the power or the will to rule ourselves. It is not because the Gospel has come that we are free from the law, but because, and only so far as, we are in a Gospel state. "It is for a righteous man" that the law is not made; and thus we see the true nature of Christian liberty. The liberty to which we are called in Christ is not the liberty of devils,—the liberty of doing what we will,—but the blessed liberty of being on the side of the law, and therefore unrestrained by it in doing right.

Illustrate from laws of coining, housebreaking, &c. We are not under them. Because we may break them as we like? Nay; the moment we desire, the law is alive again to us.

2. As a primer is used by a child to acquire by degrees principles, and a spirit.

This is the use attributed to it in verse 5. "The end of the commandment is charity."

Compare with this two other passages — "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness," and "love is the fulfilling of the law." "Perfect love casteth out fear."

In every law there is a spirit, in every maxim a principle; and the law and the maxim are laid down for the sake of conserving the spirit and the principle which they enshrine.

Paul compares God's dealing with man to a wise parent's instruction of his child. (See the Epistle to the Galatians.) Boyhood is under law; you appeal not to the boy's reason, but his will, by rewards and

punishments: Do this, and I will reward you; do it not, and you will be punished. So long as under law, salutary and necessary; but only while under law. He is free when he discerns principles, and at the same time has got, by habit, the will to obey. So that rules have done for him a double work — taught him the principle, and facilitated obedience to it.

Distinguish, however. In point of time, law is first; in point of importance, the Spirit.

In point of *time*, Charity is the end of the commandment; in point of *importance*, first and foremost.

The first thing a boy has to do, is to learn implicit obedience to rules. The first thing in importance for a man to learn is, to sever himself from maxims, rules, laws. Why? That he may become an Antinomian or a Latitudinarian? No. He is severed from submission to the *maxim*, because he has got allegiance to the *principle*. He is free from the rule and the law, because he has got the Spirit written in his heart.

This is the Gospel. A man is redeemed by Christ so far as he is not under the law; he is free from the law so far as he is free from the evil which the law restrains: he progresses so far as there is no evil in him which it is an effort to keep down, and perfect salvation and liberty are, when we, who, though having the first fruits of the Spirit, yet groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, — "to wit, the redemption of the body," — shall have been freed in body, soul, and spirit, from the last traces of the evil which can only be kept down by force. In other words, so far as Christ's statement is true of us, "The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

XX.

[Preached February 21, 1853.]

THE PRODIGAL AND HIS BROTHER.

LUKE xv. 31, 32. — "And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found."

THERE are two classes of sins. There are some sins by which man crushes, wounds, malevolently injures his brother man — those sins which speak of a bad, tyrannical, and selfish heart. Christ met those with denunciation. There are other sins by which a man injures himself. There is a life of reckless indulgence; there is a career of yielding to ungovernable propensities, which most surely conducts to wretchedness and ruin, but makes a man an object of compassion rather than of condemnation. The reception which sinners of this class met from Christ was marked by strange and pitying mercy. There was no maudlin sentiment on His lips. He called sin sin, and guilt guilt. But yet there were sins which His lips scourged; and others over which, containing in themselves their own scourge, His heart bled. That which was melancholy, and marred, and miserable, in this world, was more congenial to the heart of Christ than that which

was proudly happy. It was in the midst of a triumph, and all the pride of a procession, that He paused to weep over ruined Jerusalem. And if we ask the reason why the character of Christ was marked by this melancholy condescension, it is that He was in the midst of a world of ruins, and there was nothing there to gladden, but very much to touch with grief. He was here to restore that which was broken down and crumbling into decay. An enthusiastic antiquarian, standing amidst the fragments of an ancient temple, surrounded by dust and moss, broken pillar, and defaced architrave, with magnificent projects in his mind of restoring all this to *former* majesty, to draw out to light from mere rubbish the ruined glories, and therefore stooping down amongst the dank ivy and the rank nettles —such was Christ amidst the wreck of human nature. He was striving to lift it out of its degradation. He was searching out in revolting places that which had fallen down, that He might build it up again, in fair proportions, a holy temple to the Lord. Therefore He labored among the guilty; therefore He was the companion of outcasts; therefore He spoke tenderly and lovingly to those whom society counted undone: therefore He loved to bind up the bruised and the broken hearted; therefore His breath fanned the spark which seemed dying out in the wick of the expiring taper, when men thought it was too late, and that the hour of *hopeless* profligacy was come. It was that feature in His character — that tender, hoping, encouraging spirit of His — which the prophet Isaiah fixed upon as characteristic: "A bruised reed will He not break."

It was an illustration of this spirit which He gave

XX.

[Preached February 21, 1853.]

THE PRODIGAL AND HIS BROTHER.

LUKE xv. 31, 32. — "And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found."

THERE are two classes of sins. There are some sins by which man crushes, wounds, malevolently injures his brother man — those sins which speak of a bad, tyrannical, and selfish heart. Christ met those with denunciation. There are other sins by which a man injures himself. There is a life of reckless indulgence; there is a career of yielding to ungovernable propensities, which most surely conducts to wretchedness and ruin, but makes a man an object of compassion rather than of condemnation. The reception which sinners of this class met from Christ was marked by strange and pitying mercy. There was no maudlin sentiment on His lips. He called sin sin, and guilt guilt. But yet there were sins which His lips scourged; and others over which, containing in themselves their own scourge, His heart bled. That which was melancholy, and marred, and miserable, in this world, was more congenial to the heart of Christ than that which

was proudly happy. It was in the midst of a triumph, and all the pride of a procession, that He paused to weep over ruined Jerusalem. And if we ask the reason why the character of Christ was marked by this melancholy condescension, it is that He was in the midst of a world of ruins, and there was nothing there to gladden, but very much to touch with grief. He was here to restore that which was broken down and crumbling into decay. An enthusiastic antiquarian, standing amidst the fragments of an ancient temple, surrounded by dust and moss, broken pillar, and defaced architrave, with magnificent projects in his mind of restoring all this to *former* majesty, to draw out to light from mere rubbish the ruined glories, and therefore stooping down amongst the dank ivy and the rank nettles—such was Christ amidst the wreck of human nature. He was striving to lift it out of its degradation. He was searching out in revolting places that which had fallen down, that He might build it up again, in fair proportions, a holy temple to the Lord. Therefore He labored among the guilty; therefore He was the companion of outcasts; therefore He spoke tenderly and lovingly to those whom society counted undone; therefore He loved to bind up the bruised and the broken-hearted; therefore His breath fanned the spark which seemed dying out in the wick of the expiring taper, when men thought it was too late, and that the hour of *hopeless* profligacy was come. It was that feature in His character—that tender, hoping, encouraging spirit of His—which the prophet Isaiah fixed upon as characteristic: "A bruised reed will He not break."

It was an illustration of this spirit which He gave

in the parable which forms the subject of our consideration to-day. We find the occasion which drew it from Him in the commencement of this chapter: "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." It was then that Christ condescended to offer an excuse or an explanation of His conduct. And His excuse was this: It is natural, humanly natural, to rejoice more over that which has been recovered than over that which has been never lost. He proved that by three illustrations taken from human life. The first illustration, intended to show the feelings of Christ in winning back a sinner, was the joy which the shepherd feels in the recovery of a sheep from the mountain wilderness. The second was the satisfaction which a person feels for a recovered coin. The last was the gladness which attends the restoration of an erring son.

Now, the three parables are alike in this, that they all describe more or less vividly the feelings of the Redeemer on the recovery of the lost. But the third parable differs from the other two in this, that, besides the feelings of the Saviour, it gives us a multitude of particulars respecting the feelings, the steps, and the motives, of the penitent, who is reclaimed back to goodness. In the two first the thing lost is a coin or a sheep. It would not be possible to find any picture of remorse or gladness there. But in the third parable the thing lost is not a lifeless thing, nor a mute thing, but a being, the workings of whose human heart are all described. So that the subject opened out to us is a more extensive one — not merely the feelings

of the finder, God in Christ, but, besides that, the sensations of the wanderer himself.

In dealing with this parable, this is the line which we shall adopt:

We shall look at the picture which it draws of—

I. God's treatment of the penitent.

II. God's expostulation with the saint.

I. God's treatment of the penitent divides itself in this parable into three distinct epochs: the period of alienation, the period of repentance, and the circumstances of a penitent reception. We shall consider all these in turn.

The first truth exhibited in this parable is the alienation of man's heart from God. Homelessness, distance from our Father — that is man's state by nature in this world. The youngest son gathered all together, and took his journey into a *far* country. Brethren, this is the history of worldliness. It is a state far from God; in other words, it is a state of homelessness. And now let us ask what that means. To English hearts it is not necessary to expound elaborately the infinite meanings which cluster round that blessed expression "home." Home is the one place in all this world where hearts are sure of each other. It is the place of confidence. It is the place where we tear off that mask of guarded and suspicious coldness which the world forces us to wear in self-defence, and where we pour out the unreserved communications of full and confiding hearts. It is the spot where expressions of tenderness gush out without any sensation of awkwardness, and without any dread of ridicule. Let a man travel where he will, home is the place to which

"his heart untravelled fondly turns." He is to double all pleasure there. He is to divide all pain. A *happy home* is the single spot of rest which a man has upon this earth for the cultivation of his noblest sensibilities. And now, my brethren, if that be the description of home, is God's place of rest your home? Walk abroad and alone by night. That awful other world in the stillness and the solemn deep of the eternities above, is it your home? Those graves that lie beneath you, holding in them the infinite secret, and stamping upon all earthly loveliness the mark of frailty, and change, and fleetingness—are those graves the prospect to which in bright days and dark days you can turn without dismay? God in his splendors,— dare we feel with Him affectionate and familiar, so that trial comes softened by this feeling. It is my Father, and enjoyment can be taken with a frank feeling; my Father has given it me, without grudging, to make me happy? All that is having a home in God. Are we at home there? Why, there is demonstration in our very childhood that we are not at home with that other world of God's. An infant fears to be alone, because he feels he is not alone. He trembles in the dark, because he is conscious of the presence of the world of spirits. Long before he has been told tales of terror, there is an instinctive dread of the supernatural in the infant mind. It is the instinct which we have from childhood that gives us the feeling of another world. And mark, brethren, if the child is not at home in the thought of that world of God's, the deep of darkness and eternity is around him — God's home, but not his home, for his flesh creeps. And that feeling grows through life; not the fear — when the child becomes

a man he gets over fear — but the dislike. The man feels as much aversion as the child for the world of spirits.

Sunday comes. It breaks across the current of his worldliness. It suggests thoughts of death, and judgment, and everlasting existence. Is that home? Can the worldly man feel Sunday like a foretaste of his Father's mansion? If we could but know how many have come here to-day, not to have their souls lifted up heavenwards, but from curiosity, or idleness, or criticism, it would give us an appalling estimate of the number who are living in a far country, "having no hope, and without God in the world."

The second truth conveyed to us in this parable is the unsatisfying nature of worldly happiness. The outcast son tried to satiate his appetite with husks. A husk is an empty thing; it is a thing which looks extremely like food, and promises as much as food; but it is not food. It is a thing which when chewed will stay the appetite, but leaves the emaciated body without nourishment. Earthly happiness is a husk. We say not that there is no satisfaction in the pleasures of a worldly life. That would be an over-statement of the truth. Something there is, or else why should men persist in living for them? The cravings of man's appetite may be stayed by things which cannot satisfy him. Every new pursuit contains in it a new hope; and it is long before hope is bankrupt. But, my brethren, it is strange if a man has not found out, long before he has reached the age of thirty, that everything here is empty and disappointing. The nobler his heart, and the more unquenchable his hunger for the high and the good, the sooner will he find that out.

Bubble after bubble bursts, each bubble tinted with the celestial colors of the rainbow, and each leaving in the hand which crushes it a cold, damp drop of disappointment. All that is described in Scripture by the emphatic metaphor of "sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind;" — the whirlwind of blighted hopes, and unreturned feelings, and crushed expectations — that is the harvest which the world gives you to reap.

And now is the question asked, Why is this world unsatisfying? Brethren, it is the grandeur of the soul which God has given us which makes it insatiable in its desires — an infinite void, which cannot be filled up. A soul which was made for God, how can the world fill it? If the ocean can be still with miles of unstable waters beneath it, then the soul of man, rocking itself upon its own deep longings, with the Infinite beneath it, may rest. We were created once in majesty, to find enjoyment in God; and if our hearts are empty now, there is nothing for it but to fill up the hollowness of the soul with God. Let not that expression — filling the soul with God — pass away without a distinct meaning. God is Love and Goodness. Fill the soul with goodness, and fill the soul with love — *that* is the filling it with God. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us. There is nothing else that can satisfy. So that when we hear men of this world acknowledge, as they sometimes will do, when they are wearied with this phantom chase of life, sick of gayeties, and tired of toil, that it is not in their pursuits that they can drink the fount of blessedness; and when we see them, instead of turning aside either broken-hearted or else made wise, still persisting to trust to expectations — at fifty, sixty, or seventy years, still feverish about

some new plan of ambition—what we see is this: we see a soul formed with a capacity for high and noble things, fit for the banquet-table of God Himself, trying to fill its infinite hollownesses with husks.

Once more, there is degradation in the life of irreligion. The things which the wanderer tried to live on were not husks only. They were husks which the swine did eat. Degradation means the application of a thing to purposes lower than that for which it was intended. It is degradation to a man to live on husks, because these are not his true food. We call it degradation when we see the members of an ancient family, decayed by extravagance, working for their bread. It is not degradation for a born laborer to work for an honest livelihood. It is degradation for them, for they are not what they might have been. And, therefore, for a man to be degraded, it is not necessary that he should have given himself up to low and mean practices. It is quite enough that he is living for purposes lower than those for which God intended him. He may be a man of unblemished reputation, and yet debased in the truest meaning of the word. We were sent into this world to love God and to love man; to do good—to fill up life with deeds of generosity and usefulness. And he that refuses to work out that high destiny is a degraded man. He may turn away revolted from everything that is gross. His sensuous indulgences may be all marked by refinement and taste. His house may be filled with elegance. His library may be adorned with books. There may be the sounds in his mansion which can regale the ear, the delicacies which can stimulate the palate, and the forms of beauty which can please the eye. There may be nothing in

his whole life to offend the most chastened and fastidious delicacy; and yet, if the history of all this be, powers frittered upon time which were meant for eternity, the man is degraded; if the spirit which was created to find its enjoyment in the love of God has settled down satisfied with the love of the world, then, just as surely as the sensualist of this parable, that man has turned aside from a celestial feast to prey on garbage.

We pass on to the second period of the history of God's treatment of a sinner. It is the period of his coming to himself, or what we call repentance. The first fact of religious experience which this parable suggests to us is that common truth — men desert the world when the world deserts them. The renegade came to himself when there were no more husks to eat. He would have remained away if he could have got them; but it is written, "no man gave unto him." And this, brethren, is the record of our shame. Invitation is not enough; we must be driven to God. And the famine comes not by chance. God sends the famine into the soul — the hunger, and thirst, and the disappointment — to bring back His erring child again. Now, the world fastens upon that truth, and gets out of it a triumphant sarcasm against religion. They tell us that just as the caterpillar passes into the chrysalis, and the chrysalis into the butterfly, so profligacy passes into disgust, and disgust passes into religion. To use their own phraseology, when people become disappointed with the world, it is the last resource, they say, to turn saint. So the men of the world speak, and they think they are profoundly philosophical and concise in the account they give. The world is welcome to its very small sneer. It is the

glory of our Master's Gospel that it is the refuge of the broken-hearted. It is the strange mercy of our God that He does not reject the writhings of a jaded heart. Let the world curl its lip, if it will, when it sees through the causes of the prodigal's return. And if the sinner does not come to God taught by this disappointment, what then? If affections crushed in early life have driven one man to God; if wrecked and ruined hopes have made another man religious; if want of success in a profession has broken the spirit; if the human life, lived out too passionately, has left a surfeit and a craving behind which end in seriousness; if one is brought by the sadness of widowed life, and another by the forced desolation of involuntary single life; if when the mighty famine comes into the heart, and not a husk is left, not a pleasure untried, then, and not till then, the remorseful resolve is made, "I will arise and go to my Father:" — Well, brethren, what then? Why, this, that the history of penitence, produced as it so often is by mere disappointment, sheds only a brighter lustre round the Love of Christ, who rejoices to receive such wanderers, worthless as they are, back into His bosom. Thank God, the world's sneer is true. It *is* the last resource to turn saint. Thanks to our God, that when this gaudy world has ceased to charm, when the heart begins to feel its hollowness, and the world has lost its satisfying power, still all is not yet lost, if penitence and Christ remain, to still, to humble, and to soothe, a heart which sin has severed.

There is another truth contained in this section of the parable. After a life of wild sinfulness, religion is servitude at first, not freedom. Observe, he went back

to duty with the feelings of a slave: "I am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants." Any one who has lived in the excitement of the world, and then tried to settle down at once to quiet duty, knows how true that is. To borrow a metaphor from Israel's desert life, it is a tasteless thing to live on manna after you have been feasting upon quails. It is a dull, cold drudgery to find pleasure in simple occupation, when life has been a succession of strong emotions. Sonship it is not; it is slavery. A son obeys in love, entering heartily into his father's meaning. A servant obeys mechanically, rising early because he must; doing, it may be, his duty well, but feeling in all its force the irksomeness of the service. Sonship does not come all at once. The yoke of Christ is easy, the burden of Christ is light; but it is not light to everybody. It is light when you love it, and no man who has sinned much can love it all at once. Therefore, if I speak to any one who is trying to be religious, and heavy in heart because his duty is done too formally, — my Christian brother, fear not. You are returning, like the prodigal, with the feelings of a servant. Still, it is a real return. The spirit of adoption will come afterwards. You will often have to do duties which you cannot relish, and in which you see no meaning. So it was with Naaman at the prophet's command. He bathed, not knowing why he was bidden to bathe in Jordan. When you bend to prayer, often and often you will have to kneel with wandering thoughts, and constraining lips to repeat words into which your heart scarcely enters. You will have to perform duties when the heart is cold, and without a spark of enthusiasm to warm you. But, my Christian

brother, onwards still. Struggle to the Cross, even though it be struggling as in chains. Just as on a day of clouds, when you have watched the distant hills, dark and gray with mist, suddenly a gleam of sunshine passing over reveals to you, in that flat surface, valleys, and dells, and spots of sunny happiness, which slept before unsuspected in the fog,— so in the gloom of penitential life there will be times when God's deep peace and love will be felt shining into the soul with supernatural refreshment. Let the penitent be content with the servant's lot at first. Liberty and peace, and the bounding sensations of a Father's arms around you, come afterwards.

The last circumstance in this division of our subject is the reception which a sinner meets with on his return to God. "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry." This banquet represents to us two things. It tells of the father's gladness on his son's return. That represents God's joy on the reformation of a sinner. It tells of a banquet and a dance given to the longdost son. That represents the sinner's gladness when he first understood that God was reconciled to him in Christ. There is a strange, almost wild rapture, a strong gush of love and happiness, in those days which are called the days of first conversion. When a man who has sinned much — a profligate — turns to God, and it becomes first clear to his apprehension that there is love instead of spurning for him, there is a luxury of emotion, a banquet of tumultuous blessedness, in the moment of first love to God, which stands alone in life, nothing before and nothing

after like it. And, brethren, let us observe, this forgiveness is a thing granted while a man is yet afar off. We are not to wait for the right of being happy till we are good; we might wait forever. Joy is not delayed till we deserve it. Just so soon as a sinful man trusts that the mercy of God in Christ has done away with his transgression, the ring and the robe and the shoes are his,—the banquet, and the light of a Father's countenance.

II. We have to consider very briefly God's expostulation with a saint. There is another brother mentioned in this parable, who expressed something like indignation at the treatment which his brother met with. There are commentators who have imagined that this personage represents the Pharisees who complained that Jesus was receiving sinners. But this is manifestly impossible, because his father expostulates with him in this language, "Son, thou art ever with me;" not for one moment could that be true of the Pharisees. The true interpretation seems to be that this elder brother represents a real Christian perplexed with God's mysterious dealings. We have before us the description of one of those happy persons who have been filled with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb, and on the whole (with imperfections, of course) remained God's servant all his life. For this is his own account of himself, which the father does not contradict—"Lo! these many years do I serve thee."

We observe, then—The objection made to the reception of a notorious sinner: "Thou never gavest me a kid." Now, in this we have a fact true to Chris-

tian experience. Joy seems to be felt more vividly and more exuberantly by men who have sinned much, than by men who have grown up consistently from childhood with religious education. Rapture belongs to him whose sins, which are forgiven, are many. In the perplexity which this fact occasions, there is a feeling which is partly right and partly wrong. There is a surprise which is natural. There is a resentful jealousy which is to be rebuked. There is, first of all, a natural surprise. It was natural that the elder brother should feel perplexed and hurt. When a sinner seems to be rewarded with more happiness than a saint, it appears as if good and evil were alike undistinguished in God's dealings. It seems like putting a reconciled enemy over the head of a tried servant. It looks as if it were a kind of encouragement held out to sin, and a man begins to feel, Well, if this is to be the caprice of my father's dealing, if this rich feast of gladness be the reward of a licentious life, "Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." This is natural surprise.

But, besides this, there is a jealousy in these sensations of ours which God sees fit to rebuke. You have been trying to serve God all your life, and find it struggle, and heaviness, and dulness, still. You see another, who has outraged every obligation of life, and he is not tried by the deep prostration you think he ought to have, but bright with happiness at once. You have been making sacrifices all your life, and your worst trials come out of your most generous sacrifices. Your errors in judgment have been followed by sufferings sharper than those which crime itself could have brought. And you see men who never

made a sacrifice unexposed to trial — men whose life has been rapture purchased by the ruin of others' innocence — tasting first the pleasures of sin, and then the banquet of religion. You have been a moral man from childhood, and yet, with all your efforts, you feel the crushing conviction that it has never once been granted you to win a soul to God. And you see another man marked by inconsistency and impetuosity, banqueting every day upon the blest success of impressing and saving souls. All that is startling. And then come sadness and despondency; then come all those feelings which are so graphically depicted here: irritation — "he was angry;" swelling pride — "he would not go in;" jealousy, which required soothing — "his father went out and entreated him."

And now, brethren, mark the father's answer. It does not account for this strange dealing by God's sovereignty. It does not cut the knot of the difficulty, instead of untying it, by saying God has a *right* to do what He will. He does not urge, God has a right to act on favoritism if He please. But it assigns two reasons. The first reason is, "It was *meet*, right that we should make merry." It is meet that God should be glad on the reclamation of a sinner. It is meet that that sinner, looking down into the dreadful chasm over which he had been tottering, should feel a shudder of delight through all his frame on thinking of his escape. And it is meet that religious men should not feel jealous of one another, but freely and generously join in thanking God that others have got happiness, even if *they* have not. The spirit of religious exclusiveness, which looks down contemptuously instead of tenderly on worldly men, and banishes a man forever from the

circle of its joys because he has sinned notoriously, is a bad spirit.

Lastly, the reason given for this dealing is, "Son, thou art always with me, and all that I have is thine." By which Christ seems to tell us that the disproportion between man and man is much less than we suppose. The profligate had had one hour of ecstasy — the other had had a whole life of peace. A consistent Christian may not have rapture; but he has that which is much better than rapture — calmness, God's serene and perpetual presence. And, after all, brethren, that is the best. One to whom much is forgiven has much joy. He must have it, if it were only to support him through those fearful trials which are to come, — those haunting reminiscences of a polluted heart, those frailties, those inconsistencies, to which the habits of past indulgence have made him liable. A terrible struggle is in store for him yet. Grudge him not one hour of unclouded exultation. But religion's best gift — rest, serenity, the quiet daily love of one who lives perpetually with his Father's family, uninterrupted usefulness — *that* belongs to him who has lived steadily, and walked with duty, neither grieving nor insulting the Holy Spirit of his God. The man who serves God early has the best of it. Joy is well in its way, but a few flashes of joy are trifles in comparison with a life of peace. Which is best, — the flash of joy lighting up the whole heart, and then darkness till the next flash comes, or the steady calm sunlight of day, in which men work?

And now, one word to those who are living this young man's life — thinking to become religious, as he did, when they have got tired of the world. I speak

to those who are leading what, in the world's softened language of concealment, is called a gay life. Young brethren, let two motives be urged earnestly upon your attention. The first is the motive of mere honorable feeling. We will say nothing about the uncertainty of life. We will not dwell upon this fact, that impressions resisted now may never come back again. We will not appeal to terror. That is not the weapon which a Christian minister loves to use. If our lips were clothed with thunder, it is not denunciation which makes men Christians; let the appeal be made to every high and generous feeling in a young man's bosom. Deliberately and calmly you are going to do *this:* to spend the best and most vigorous portion of your days in idleness, in uselessness, in the gratification of self, in the contamination of others. And then weakness, the relics, and the miserable dregs of life—you are going to give *that* sorry offering to God, because His mercy endureth forever! Shame—shame upon the heart which can let such a plan rest in it one moment! If it be there, crush it like a man. It is a degrading thing to enjoy husks till there is no man to give them. It is a base thing to resolve to give to God as little as possible, and not to serve Him till you must.

Young brethren, I speak principally to you. You have health for God now. You have strength of mind and body. You have powers which may fit you for real usefulness. You have appetites for enjoyment which can be consecrated to God. You acknowledge the law of honor. Well, then, by every feeling of manliness and generosity, remember this:

now, and not later, is your time to learn what religion means.

There is another motive, and a very solemn one, to be urged upon those who are delaying. Every moment of delay adds bitterness to after struggles. The moment of a feeling of hired servitude must come. If a man will not obey God with a warm heart, he may hereafter have to do it with a cold one. To be holy is the work of a long life. The experience of ten thousand lessons teaches only a little of it; and all this, the work of becoming like God, the man who delays is crowding into the space of a few years, or a few months. When we have lived long a life of sin, do we think that repentance and forgiveness will obliterate all the traces of sin upon the character? Be sure that every sin pays its price: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." O! there are recollections of past sin which come crowding up to the brain, with temptation in them. There are old habits which refuse to be mastered by a few enthusiastic sensations. There is so much of the old man clinging to the penitent who has waited long, — he is so much, as a religious man, like what he was when he was a worldly man, — that it is doubtful whether he ever reaches in this world the full stature of Christian manhood. Much warm earnestness, but strange inconsistencies — that is the character of one who is an old man and a young Christian. Brethren, do we wish to risk all this? Do we want to learn holiness with terrible struggles, and sore affliction, and the plague of much remaining evil? Then *wait* before you turn to God.

XXI.

[Preached May 15, 1853.]

JOHN'S REBUKE OF HEROD.

Luke iii. 19, 20. — "But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison."

The life of John the Baptist divides itself into three distinct periods. Of the first we are told almost nothing, but we may conjecture much. We are told that he was in the deserts till his showing unto Israel. It was a period, probably, in which, saddened by the hollowness of all life in Israel, and perplexed with the controversies of Jerusalem, — the controversies of Sadducee with Pharisee, of formalist with mystic, of the disciples of one infallible Rabbi with the disciples of another infallible Rabbi, — he fled for refuge to the wilderness, to see whether God could not be found there by the heart that sought Him, without the aid of churches, rituals, creeds, and forms. This period lasted thirty years.

The second period is a shorter one. It comprises the few months of his public ministry. His difficulties were over; he had reached conviction enough to live and die on. He knew not all, but he knew something. He could not baptize with the Spirit, but he could at

least baptize with water. It was not given to him to build up, but it was given to him to pull down all false foundations. He knew that the highest truth of spiritual life was to be given by One that should come after. What he had learned in the desert was contained in a few words — Reality lies at the root of religious life. Ye must be real, said John. "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." Let each man do his own duty: let the rich impart to those who are not rich; let the publican accuse no man falsely: let the soldier be content with his wages. The coming kingdom is not a mere piece of machinery, which will make you all good and happy without effort of your own. Change yourselves, or you will have no kingdom at all. Personal reformation, personal reality, *that* was John's message to the world. An incomplete one; but he delivered it as his all, manfully; and his success was signal, astonishing even to himself. Successful it was, because it appealed to all the deepest wants of the human heart. It told of peace to those who had been agitated by tempestuous passion. It promised forgetfulness of past transgression to those whose consciences smarted with self-accusing recollections. It spoke of refuge from the wrath to come to those who had felt it a fearful expectation to fall into the hands of an angry God. And the result of that message, conveyed by the symbol of baptism, was that the desert swarmed with crowds who owned the attractive spell of the power of a new life made possible. Warriors, paupers, profligates, — some admiring the nobleness of religious life, others needing it to fill up the empty hollow of an unsatisfied heart, — the penitent, the heart-broken, the worldly, and the disappointed, all came. And with

them there came two other classes of men, whose approach roused the Baptist to astonishment.

The formalist, not satisfied with his formality, and the infidel, unable to rest on his infidelity — they came too, startled, for one hour, at least, to the real significance of life, and shaken out of unreality. The Baptist's message wrung the confession from their souls, — "Yes, our system will not do. We are not happy, after all; we are miserable. Prophet, whose solitary life, far away there in the desert, has been making to itself a home in the mysterious and the invisible, what hast thou got to tell us from that awful other world? What are we to do?" These things belong to a period of John's life anterior to the text.

The prophet has been hitherto in a self-selected solitude, the free, wild desert, opening his heart to the strange sights and sounds through which the grand voice of oriental nature speaks of God to the soul, in a way that books cannot speak. We have arrived at the third period of his history. We are now to consider him as the tenant of a *compelled* solitude, in the dungeon of a capricious tyrant. Hitherto, by that rugged energy with which he battled with the temptations of this world, he has been shedding a glory round human life. We are now to look at him equally alone, equally majestic, shedding by martyrdom almost a brighter glory round human death. He has hitherto been receiving the homage of almost unequalled popularity. We are now to observe him reft of every admirer, every soother, every friend. He has been hitherto overcoming the temptations of existence by entire seclusion from them all. We are now to ask how he will stem those seductions

when he is brought into the very midst of them, and the whole outward aspect of his life has laid aside its distinctive and peculiar character; when he has ceased to be the anchorite, and has become the idol of a court.

Much instruction, brethren, there ought to be in all this, if we only knew rightly how to bring it out, or even to paint, in anything like intelligible colors, the picture which our own minds have formed. Instructive, because human life must ever be instructive. How a human spirit contrived to get its life accomplished in this confused world; what a man like us, and yet no common man, felt, did, suffered; how he fought, and how he conquered; — if we could only get a clear possession and firm grasp of *that*, we should have got almost all that is worth having in truth, with the technicalities stripped off, — for what is the use of truth except to teach man how to live? There is a vast value in genuine biography. It is good to have real views of what Life is, and what Christian Life may be. It is good to familiarize ourselves with the history of those whom God has pronounced the salt of the earth. We cannot help contracting good from such association.

And just one thing respecting this man whom we are to follow for some time to-day. Let us not be afraid of seeming to rise into a mere enthusiastic panegyric of a man. It is a rare man we have to deal with, one of God's heroic ones, a true conqueror; one whose life and motives it is hard to understand without feeling warmly and enthusiastically about them; one of the very highest characters, rightly understood, of all the Bible. Panegyric such as we

can give, what is it after he has been stamped by his Master's eulogy—"A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." In the verse which is to serve us for our guidance on this subject there are two branches which will afford us fruit of contemplation. It is written, "Herod being *reproved* by John for Herodias."

Here is our first subject of thought:

The truthfulness of Christian character.

And then, next, he "shut up John in prison."

Here is our second topic:

The apparent failure of religious life.

The point which we have to look at in this section of the Baptist's life is the truthfulness of religious character. For the prophet was now in a sphere of life altogether new. He had got to the third act of his history. The first was performed right manfully in the desert—that is past. He has now become a known man, celebrated through the country, brought into the world, great men listening to him, and in the way, if he chooses it, to become familiar with the polished life of Herod's court. For this we read: Herod observed John; that is, cultivated his acquaintance, paid him marked attention, heard him, did many things at his bidding, and heard him gladly.

For thirty long years John had lived in that far-off desert, filling his soul with the grandeur of solitude, content to be unknown,—not conscious, most likely, that there was anything supernatural in him,—living with the mysterious God in silence. And then came the day when the qualities, so secretly nursed, became

known in the great world — men felt that there was a greater than themselves before them; and then came the trial of admiration, when the crowds congregated round to listen. And all that trial John bore uninjured; for, when those vast crowds dispersed at night, he was left alone with God and the universe once more. That prevented his being spoilt by flattery. But now comes the great trial. John is transplanted from the desert to the town: he has quitted simple life — he has come to artificial life. John has won a king's attention, and now the question is, Will the diamond of the mine bear polishing without breaking into shivers? Is the iron prophet melting into voluptuous softness? Is he getting the world's manners, and the world's courtly insincerity? Is he becoming artificial through his change of life? My Christian brethren, we find nothing of the kind. There he stands in Herod's voluptuous court, the prophet of the desert still, unseduced by blandishment from his high loyalty, and fronting his patron and his prince with the stern, unpalatable truth of God.

It is refreshing to look on such a scene as this, — the highest, the very highest moment, I think, in all John's history — higher than his ascetic life. For, after all, ascetic life, such as he had led before, when he fed on locusts and wild honey, is hard only in the first resolve. When you have once made up your mind to that, it becomes a habit to live alone. To lecture the poor about religion is not hard. To speak of unworldliness to men with whom we do not associate, and who do not see *our* daily inconsistencies, *that* is not hard. To speak contemptuously of the world when we have no power of commanding its admiration, *that* is not

difficult. But when God has given a man accomplishments, or powers, which would enable him to shine in society, and he can still be firm, and steady, and uncompromisingly true; when he can be as undaunted before the rich as before the poor; when rank and fashion cannot subdue him into silence; when he hates moral evil as sternly in a great man as he would in a peasant — there is truth in that man. This was the test to which the Baptist was submitted. And now contemplate him, for a moment; forget that he is an historical personage, and remember that he was a man like us. Then comes the trial. All the habits and rules of polite life would be whispering such advice as this: "Only keep your remarks within the limits of politeness. If you cannot approve, be silent; you can do no good by finding fault with the great." We know how the whole spirit of a man like John would have revolted at that. Imprisonment? Yes. Death? Well, a man can die but once, — anything, but not cowardice, not meanness, not pretending what I do not feel, and disguising what I do feel. Brethren, death is not the worst thing in this life: it is not difficult to die — five minutes, and the sharpest agony is past. The worst thing in this life is cowardly untruthfulness. Let men be rough, if they will, — let them be unpolished, — but let Christian men, in all they say, be sincere. No flattery; no speaking smoothly to a man before his face, while all the time there is a disapproval of his conduct in the heart. The thing we want in Christianity is not politeness, — it is sincerity.

Now, there are three things which we remark in this truthfulness of John. The first is its straightforwardness, the second is its unconsciousness, and the last its

unselfishness. The straightforwardness is remarkable in this circumstance, that there is no indirect coming to the point. At once, without circumlocution, the true man speaks—"It is not lawful for thee to have her." There are some men whom God has gifted with a rare simplicity of heart, which makes them utterly incapable of pursuing the subtle excuses which can be made for evil. There is in John no morbid sympathy for the offender. "It is not lawful." He does not say, "It is *best* to do otherwise; it is unprofitable for your own happiness to live in this way." He says, plainly, "It is wrong for you to do this evil."

Earnest men in this world have no time for subtleties and casuistry. Sin is detestable, horrible, in God's sight; and when once it has been made clear that it is not lawful, a Christian has nothing to do with toleration of it. If we dare not tell our patron of his sin, we must give up his patronage. In the next place, there was unconsciousness in John's rebuke. We remark, brethren, that he was utterly ignorant that he was doing a fine thing. There was no sidelong glance, as in a mirror, of admiration for himself. He was not feeling, This is brave. He never stopped to feel that afterages would stand by, and look at that deed of his, and say, "Well done." His reproof comes out as the natural impulse of an earnest heart. John was the last of all men to feel that he had done anything extraordinary. And this we hold to be an inseparable mark of truth. No true man is conscious that he is true; he is rather conscious of insincerity. No brave man is conscious of his courage; bravery is *natural* to him. The skin of Moses' face shone after he had been with God, but Moses wist not of it. There are

many of us who would have prefaced that rebuke with a long speech. We should have begun by observing how difficult it was to speak to a monarch; how delicate the subject; how much proof we were giving of our friendship. We should have asked the great man to accept it as a proof of our devotion. John does nothing of this. Prefaces betray anxiety about self. John was not thinking of himself; he was thinking of God's offended law, and the guilty king's soul. Brethren, it is a lovely and a graceful thing to see men natural. It is beautiful to see men sincere without being haunted with the consciousness of their sincerity. There is a sickly habit that men get of looking into themselves, and thinking how they are appearing. We are always unnatural when we do that. The very tread of one who is thinking how he appears to others becomes dizzy with affectation. He is too conscious of what he is doing; and self-consciousness is affectation. Let us aim at being natural. And we can only become natural by thinking of God and duty, instead of the way in which we are serving God and duty.

There was, lastly, something exceedingly unselfish in John's truthfulness. We do not build much on a man's being merely true. It costs some men nothing to be true, for they have none of those sensibilities which shrink from inflicting pain. There is a surly, bitter way of speaking truth, which says little for a man's heart. Some men have not delicacy enough to feel that it is an awkward and a painful thing to rebuke a brother; they are in their element when they can become censors of the great. John's truthfulness was not like that. It was the earnest, loving nature of the man which made him say sharp things. Was it to

gratify spleen that he reproved Herod for all the evils he had done? Was it to minister to a diseased and disappointed misanthropy? Little do we understand the depth of tenderness which there is in a rugged, true nature, if we think that. John's whole life was an iron determination to crush self in everything.

Take a single instance. John's ministry was gradually superseded by the ministry of Christ. It was the moon waning before the Sun. They came and told him that, "Rabbi, He to whom thou barest witness beyond Jordan baptizeth, and all men come unto Him." Two of his own personal friends — apparently some of the last he had left — deserted him, and went to the new teacher.

And now let us estimate the keenness of that trial. Remember, John was a man; he had tasted the sweets of influence; that influence was dying away, and just in the prime of life he was to become *nothing*. Who cannot conceive the keenness of that trial? Bearing that in mind, what is the prophet's answer? One of the most touching sentences in all Scripture; calmly, meekly, the hero recognizes his destiny — "He must increase, but I must decrease." He does more than recognize it; he rejoices in it — rejoices to be nothing, to be forgotten, despised, so as only Christ can be everything. "The friend of the bridegroom rejoiceth because he heareth the bridegroom's voice, this my joy is fulfilled." And it *is this* man, with self so thoroughly crushed, — the outward self by bodily austerities, the inward self by Christian humbleness, — it is this man who speaks so sternly to his sovereign "It is not lawful." Was there any gratification of human feeling there? Or was not the rebuke unselfish —

meant for God's honor, dictated by the uncontrollable hatred of all evil, careless altogether of personal consequences?

Now, it is this, my brethren, that *we* want. The world-spirit can rebuke as sharply as the Spirit which was in John; the world-spirit can be severe upon the great when it is jealous. The worldly man cannot bear to hear of another's success; he cannot endure to hear another praised for accomplishments, or another succeeding in a profession; and the world can fasten very bitterly upon a neighbor's faults, and say, "It is not lawful." We expect that in the world. But that this should creep among religious men, that *we* should be bitter, — that we, *Christians*, should suffer jealousy to enthrone itself in our hearts, — that we should find fault from spleen, and not from love, — that we should not be able to be calm, and gentle, and sweet-tempered, when we decrease, when our powers fail, — *that* is the shame. The love of Christ is intended to make such men as John — such high and heavenly characters. What is our Christianity worth, if it cannot teach us a truthfulness, an unselfishness, and a generosity, beyond the world's?

We are to say something, in the second place, of the apparent failure of Christian life.

The concluding sentence of this verse informs us that John was shut up in prison. And the first thought which suggests itself is, that a magnificent career is cut short too soon. At the very outset of ripe and experienced manhood, the whole thing ends in failure. John's day of active usefulness is over; at thirty years of age his work is done; and what permanent effect have all his labors left? The crowds

that listened to his voice, awed into silence by Jordan's side — we hear of them no more. Herod heard John gladly — did much good by reason of his influence. What was all that worth? The prophet comes to himself in a dungeon, and wakes to the bitter conviction, that his influence had told much in the way of commanding attention, and even winning reverence, but very little in the way of gaining souls; the bitterest, the most crushing discovery, in the whole circle of ministerial experience. All this was seeming failure. And thus, brethren, is the picture of almost all human life. To some moods, and under some aspects, it seems, as it seemed to the psalmist, "Man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain." Go to any church-yard, and stand ten minutes among the grave-stones; read inscription after inscription, recording the date of birth and the date of death of him who lies below, — all the trace which myriads have left behind of their having done their day's work on God's earth, — that is failure — seems so. Cast the eye down the columns of any commander's despatch, after a general action. The men fell by thousands; the officers, by hundreds. Courage, high hope, self-devotion, ended in smoke — forgotten by the time of the next list of slain; that is the future of life once more. Cast your eye over the shelves of a public library. There is the hard toil of years, the product of a life of thought; all that remains of it is there in a worm-eaten folio, taken down once in a century. Failure of human life, again. Stand by the most enduring of all human labors, the pyramids of Egypt. One hundred thousand men, year by year, raised those enormous piles to protect the corpses of the buried from rude inspection.

The spoiler's hand has been there, and the bodies have been rifled from their mausoleum, and three thousand years have written "failure" upon that. In all that, my Christian brethren, if we look no deeper than the surface, we read the grave of human hope, the apparent nothingness of human labor.

And then look at this history once more. In the isolation of John's dying hour, there appears failure again. When a great man dies, we listen to hear what he has to say; we turn to the last page of his biography first, to see what he had to bequeath to the world as his experience of life. We expect that the wisdom which he has been hiving up for years will distil in honeyed sweetness then. It is generally not so. There is stupor and silence at the last. "How dieth the wise man?" asks Solomon; and he answers bitterly, "As the fool." The martyr of truth dies privately in Herod's dungeon. We have no record of his last words. There were no crowds to look on. We cannot describe how he received his sentence. Was he calm? Was he agitated? Did he bless his murderer? Did he give utterance to any deep reflections on human life? All that is shrouded in silence. He bowed his head, and the sharp stroke fell flashing down. We know that, we know no more — apparently a noble life abortive.

And now let us ask the question distinctly, Was all this, indeed, failure? No, my Christian brethren, it was sublimest victory. John's work was no failure; he left behind him no sect to which he had given his name, but his disciples passed into the service of Christ, and were absorbed in the Christian Church. Words from John had made impressions, and men for

got in after years *where* the impressions first came from; but the day of judgment will not forget. John laid the foundations of a temple, and others built upon it. He laid it in a struggle, in martyrdom. It was covered up like the rough masonry below ground; but when we look round on the vast Christian Church, we are looking at the superstructure of John's toil.

There is a lesson for us in all that, if we will learn it. Work, true work, done honestly and manfully for Christ, *never* can be a failure. Your own work, my brethren, which God has given you to do, whatever that is, let it be done truly. Leave eternity to show that it has not been in vain in the Lord. Let it but be work, it will tell. True Christian life is like the march of a conquering army into a fortress which has been breached. Men fall by hundreds in the ditch. Was their fall a failure? Nay, for their bodies bridge over the hollow, and over them the rest pass on to victory. The quiet religious worship that we have this day — how comes it to be ours? It was purchased for us by the constancy of such men as John, who freely gave their lives. We are treading upon a bridge of martyrs. The suffering was theirs — the victory ours. John's career was no failure. Yet we have one more circumstance which *seems* to tell of failure. In John's prison, solitude, misgiving, black doubt, seem for a time to have taken possession of the prophet's soul. All that we know of those feelings is this: — John, while in confinement, sent two of his disciples to Christ, to say to him, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Here is the language of painful uncertainty. We shall not marvel at this, if we look steadily at the circumstances.

Let us conceive John's feelings. The enthusiastic child of Nature, who had roved in the desert, free as the air he breathed, is now suddenly arrested, and his strong, restless heart limited to the four walls of a narrow dungeon. And there he lay startled. An eagle cleaving the air with motionless wing, and in the midst of his career brought from the black cloud by an arrow to the ground, and looking round with his wild, large eye, stunned, and startled there,—just such was the free prophet of the wilderness, when Herod's guards had curbed his noble flight, and left him alone in his dungeon. Now, there is apparent failure here, brethren; it is not the thing which we should have expected. We should have expected that a man who had lived so close to God all his life would have no misgivings in his last hours. But, my brethren, it is not so. It is the strange truth that some of the highest of God's servants are tried with darkness on the dying bed. Theory would say, when a religious man is laid up for his last struggles, now he is alone for deep communion with his God. Fact very often says, "No — now he is alone, as his Master was before him, in the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Look at John in imagination, and you would say, "Now his rough pilgrimage is done. He is quiet, out of the world, with the rapt foretaste of heaven in his soul." Look at John in fact. He is agitated, sending to Christ, not able to rest, grim doubt wrestling with his soul, misgiving for one last black hour whether all his hope has not been delusion. There is one thing we remark here, by the way. Doubt often comes from inactivity. We cannot give the philosophy of it, but this is the fact,— Christians who have nothing to do

but to sit thinking of themselves, meditating, sentimentalizing, are almost sure to become the prey of dark, black misgivings. John struggling in the desert needs no proof that Jesus is the Christ. John shut up became morbid and doubtful immediately. Brethren, all this is very marvellous. The history of a human soul *is* marvellous. We are mysteries, but here is the practical lesson of it all. For sadness, for suffering, for misgiving, there is no remedy but stirring and doing.

Now, look once more at these doubts of John's. All his life long, John had been wishing and expecting that the kingdom of God would come. The kingdom of God is Right triumphant over Wrong, moral evil crushed, goodness set up in its place, the true man recognized, the false man put down and forgotten. All his life long, John had panted for that; his hope was to make men better. He tried to make the soldiers merciful, and the publicans honest, and the Pharisees sincere. His complaint was, Why is the world the thing it is? All his life long, he had been appealing to the invisible justice of Heaven against the visible brute force which he saw around him. Christ had appeared, and his hopes were straining to the utmost. "Here is the Man!" And now, behold, here is no Kingdom of Heaven at all, but one of darkness still, oppression and cruelty triumphant, Herod putting God's prophet in prison, and the Messiah quietly letting things take their course. Can that be indeed Messiah? All this was exceedingly startling. And it seems that then John began to feel the horrible doubt whether the whole thing were not a mistake, and whether all that which he had taken for inspiration

were not, after all, only the excited hopes of an enthusiastic temperament. Brethren, the prophet was well-nigh on the brink of failure.

But let us mark — that a man has doubts — *that* is not the evil; all earnest men must expect to be tried with doubts. All men who feel, with their whole souls, the value of the truth which is at stake, cannot be satisfied with a "perhaps." Why, when all that is true and excellent in this world, all that is worth living for, is in that question of questions, it is no marvel if we sometimes wish, like Thomas, to see the prints of the nails, to know whether Christ be indeed our Lord or not. Cold hearts are not anxious enough to doubt. Men who love will have their misgivings, at times; that is not the evil. But the evil is, when men go on in that languid, doubting way, content to doubt, proud of their doubts, morbidly glad to talk about them, liking the romantic gloom of twilight, without the manliness to say, I must and will know the truth. That did not John. Brethren, John appealed to Christ. He did exactly what we do when we pray — and he got his answer. Our Master said to his disciples, Go to my suffering servant, and give him proof. Tell John the things ye see and hear — "The blind see, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." Now, there is a deep lesson wrapped up in this. We get a firm grasp of truth by prayer. Communion with Christ is the best proof of Christ's existence and Christ's love. It is so, even in human life. Misgivings gather darkly round our heart about our friend in his absence; but we see his frank smile, we feel his affectionate grasp: our suspicions go to sleep again. It is just so in religion. No man is in

the habit of praying to God in Christ, and then doubts whether Christ is He "that should come." It is in the power of prayer to realize Christ, to bring Him near, to make you feel His life stirring like a pulse within you. Jacob could not doubt whether he had been with God when his sinew shrunk. John could not doubt whether Jesus was the Christ when the things He had done were pictured out so vividly in answer to his prayer. Let but a man live with Christ anxious to have his own life destroyed, and Christ's life established in its place, losing himself in Christ, that man will have all his misgivings silenced. These are the two remedies for doubt — Activity and Prayer. He who works, and *feels* he works — he who prays, and *knows* he prays — has got the secret of transforming life-failure into life-victory.

In conclusion, brethren, we make three remarks which could not be introduced into the body of this subject. The first is — Let young and ardent minds, under the first impressions of religion, beware how they pledge themselves, by any open profession, to more than they can perform. Herod warmly took up religion, at first, courted the prophet of religion, and then, when the hot fit of enthusiasm had passed away, he found that he had a clog round his life, from which he could only disengage himself by a rough, rude effort. Brethren, whom God has touched, it is good to count the cost before you begin. If you give up present pursuits *impetuously*, are you sure that present impulses will last? Are you quite certain that a day will not come when you will curse the hour in which you broke altogether with the world? Are you quite sure that the revulsion back again will not be as im-

petuous as Herod's, and your hatred of the religion, which has become a clog, as intense as it is now ardent?

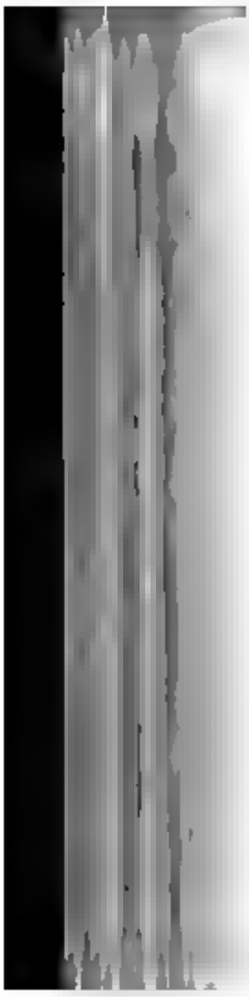
Many things, doubtless, there are, to be given up — amusements that are dangerous, society that is questionable. What we give up, let us give up, not from quick feeling, but from principle. Enthusiasm is a lovely thing; but let us be calm in what we do. In that solemn, grand thing — Christian life — one step backward is religious death.

Once more: we get from this subject the doctrine of a resurrection. John's life was hardness; his end was agony. That is frequently Christian life. Therefore, says the apostle, if there be no resurrection, the Christian's choice is wrong: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, then are we of all men most miserable." Christian life is not visible success — very often the apparent opposite of success. It is the resurrection of Christ working itself out *in* us; but it is very often the Cross of Christ imprinting itself on us very sharply. The highest prize which God has to give here is martyrdom. The highest style of life is the Baptist's — heroic, enduring, manly love. The noblest coronet which any son of man can wear is a crown of thorns. Christian, *this* is not your rest. Be content to feel that this world is not your home. Homeless upon earth, try more and more to make your home in heaven, above with Christ.

Lastly, we have to learn from this, that devotedness to Christ is our only blessedness. It is surely a strange thing to see the way in which men crowded round the austere prophet, all saying, "Guide us, we cannot guide ourselves." Publicans, Pharisees, Sadducees,

Herod, whenever John appears, all bend before him offering him homage and leadership. How do we account for this? The truth is, the spirit of man groans beneath the weight of its own freedom. When a man has no guide, no master but himself, he is miserable: we want guidance; and if we find a man nobler, wiser than ourselves, it is almost our instinct to prostrate our affections before that man, as the crowds did by Jordan, and say, "Be my example, my guide, my soul's sovereign." That passionate need of worship — hero-worship it has been called — is a primal, universal instinct of the heart. Christ is the answer to it. Men will not do. We try to find men to reverence thoroughly, and we cannot do it. We go through life finding guides, rejecting them one after another, expecting nobleness and finding meanness; and we turn away with a recoil of disappointment.

There is no disappointment in Christ. Christ can be our souls' sovereign. Christ can be our guide. Christ can absorb all the admiration which our hearts long to give. We want to worship men. These Jews wanted to worship man. They were right — man is the rightful object of our worship; but in the roll of ages there has been but one man whom we can adore without idolatry, — the Man Jesus Christ



The borrower must return this item on or before the last date stamped below. If another user places a recall for this item, the borrower will be notified of the need for an earlier return.

Non-receipt of overdue notices does ***not*** *exempt the borrower from overdue fines.*

Harvard College Widener Library
Cambridge, MA 02138 617-495-2413

HARVARD
WIDENER
JUL 0 2 2004
FEB 1 0 2002
CANCELLED

Please handle with care.
Thank you for helping to preserve
library collections at Harvard.